

June 1, 2015

Mr. B. H. Whitley, Director  
Regulatory Affairs  
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.  
42 Inverness Center Parkway  
Birmingham, AL 35242

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY'S  
REQUEST FOR LICENSE AMENDMENT (LAR 15-009) FOR THE VOGTLE  
ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4: USE OF AWS D1.1-2000  
CRITERIA FOR STRUCTURAL WELDS (TAC NO. RP9513)

Dear Mr. Whitley:

By letter dated May 26, 2015 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. ML15146A444), Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) submitted a license amendment request for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4 Combined License (COL) Nos. NPF-91 and NPF-92. SNC proposes to depart from Tier 2\* and associated Tier 2 information in the VEGP Units 3 and 4 Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (which includes the plant specific Design Control Document Tier 2 information) to revise the application of American Institute for Steel Construction (AISC) N690-1994, "Specification for the Design, Fabrication and Erection of Steel Safety Related Structures for Nuclear Facilities, to allow use of American Welding Society (AWS) D1.1-2000, "Structural Welding Code-Steel," in lieu of the AWS D1.1-1992 edition identified in AISC N690-1994.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's acceptance review of this request. The acceptance review was performed to determine if there is sufficient technical information in scope and depth to allow the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical reviews. The acceptance review is also intended to identify whether the application has any readily apparent information insufficiencies in its characterization of the regulatory requirements or the licensing basis of the plant.

Consistent with Section 50.90 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), an application for an amendment to the license must fully describe the changes requested, and follow as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications. Section 52.79 of 10 CFR addresses content of technical information that is required for COL application Final Safety Analysis Reports. This section stipulates that the submittal address the design and operating characteristics, unusual or novel design features, and principal safety considerations.

The NRC staff has reviewed your application and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical reviews and make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed amendment in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment. Given the lesser scope and depth of the acceptance review as compared to the detailed technical review, there may be instances in which issues that impact the NRC staff's

ability to complete the detailed technical review are identified despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. You will be advised of any further information needed to support the NRC staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-3025 or [Chandu.Patel@nrc.gov](mailto:Chandu.Patel@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Chandu Patel, Senior Project Manager  
Licensing Branch 4  
Division of New Reactor Licensing  
Office of New Reactors

Docket No(s): 52-025  
52-026

cc: See next page

ability to complete the detailed technical review are identified despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. You will be advised of any further information needed to support the NRC staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-3025 or [Chandu.Patel@nrc.gov](mailto:Chandu.Patel@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Chandu Patel, Senior Project Manager  
Licensing Branch 4  
Division of New Reactor Licensing  
Office of New Reactors

Docket No(s): 52-025  
52-026

cc: See next page

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(Revised 04/27/2015)

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