

February 8, 2017

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'S LICENSE  
AMENDMENT REQUEST FOR THE VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT  
UNITS 3 AND 4: CARBON STEEL EMBEDMENT PLATE WELDS TESTING  
(LAR 16-027)

Dear Mr. Whitley:

By letter dated October 20, 2016 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession Number ML16294A521), Southern Nuclear Operating Company submitted a license amendment request for Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Units 3 and 4. The proposed license amendment request would change the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) in the form of departures from the incorporated plant-specific Design Control Document (DCD) Tier 2 information.

The proposed departures consist of changes to Tier 2\* information in the UFSAR (which includes the plant-specific DCD information) to clarify the quality and strength of a specific set of couplers welded to carbon steel embedment plates, already installed and embedded in concrete, is demonstrated through visual examination and static tension testing, in lieu of the nondestructive examination requirements of American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) N690.

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

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (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 review 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 Senior Project Manager, Peter Hearn, at (301) 415-1189 or [Peter.Hearn@NRC.gov](mailto:Peter.Hearn@NRC.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Peter C. Hearn, 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

ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING'S LICENSE AMENDMENT  
REQUEST FOR THE VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4 CARBON  
STEEL EMBEDMENT PLATE WELDS TESTING LAR 16-027 DATED FEBRUARY 8, 2017

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(Revised 11/14/2016)

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