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ACCESSION NBR: 9206250304 DOC. DATE: 92/06/16 NOTARIZED: NO DOCKET #
 FACIL: 50-397 WPPSS Nuclear Project, Unit 2, Washington Public Power 05000397
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 RECIP. NAME: Document Control Branch (Document Control Desk)
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SUBJECT: Comments on 920609 telcon re fuel rod growth in Siemens Nuclear Power (SNP) 8x8 fuel assemblies. Util will conduct insp of subj assemblies during R8 refueling outage, in ref to 920225 request for amend to TS.

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9206250304 920616
PDR ADDCK 05000397
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June 16, 1992
G02-92-144

Docket No. 50-397

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attn: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Gentlemen:

Subject: WNP-2, OPERATING LICENSE NPF-21
TELECON REGARDING FUEL ROD GROWTH IN
SIEMENS NUCLEAR POWER (SNP) 8X8 FUEL ASSEMBLIES

- References: 1) Letter G02-92-049 dated February 25, 1992, GC Sorensen (SS) to NRC, "Request for Amendment to Technical Specification Safety Limit; Thermal Power, High Pressure and High Flow"
- 2) Letter G02-92-118 dated May 11, 1992, GC Sorensen (SS) to NRC, "Approval of Extended Burnup for 8X8 Fuel"

On June 9, 1992, a telephone conference call was held between individuals of the Supply System and the NRC to discuss the potential impact of the SNP 8x8 BWR fuel assemblies with differential rod growth observed at the Grand Gulf facility. Participating from the Supply System were Dale Atkinson, Marsha Eades, Dave Skeen, and Dave Whitcomb. Larry Phillips, Ed Kendrick and Bill Dean represented the NRC. The discussion centered on two open topics; the status of the Technical Specification amendment request for a change in the Minimum Critical Power Ratio Safety Limit, and the request for approval to extend the allowable burnup exposure for SNP 8x8 fuel from 35 GWd/MTU to 37 GWd/MTU. The two topics are currently under review by the staff, but response to the requests is delayed by the differential rod growth issue.

During the disassembly of an SNP 8x8 fuel assembly, inspectors at Grand Gulf observed that some fuel rods had grown in length more than tie rods in the same bundle. Because of the fuel rod growth in excess of the tie rod growth and the predicted fuel rod growth, the assembly could not be disassembled. Last week an inspection was preformed on six SNP 8x8 assemblies at WNP-2 by representatives from the Supply System and SNP. Some of the fuel rod cladding at WNP-2 is from the same manufactured batch as cladding used at Grand Gulf. Fuel rods with the cladding from the corresponding batches were included in the inspection at WNP-2. Nothing was observed during the inspection to indicate a condition similar to that seen at Grand Gulf. However, until SNP completes the root cause analysis, the Supply System will be closely monitoring this SNP investigation.

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Page Two

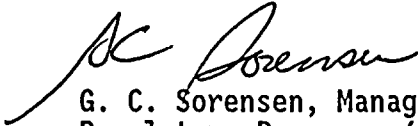
TELECON REGARDING FUEL ROD GROWTH IN
SIEMENS NUCLEAR POWER (SNP) 8X8 FUEL ASSEMBLIES

The Supply System will evaluate the results of the SNP effort as they are made available. If, at any time, the results of the SNP root cause evaluation indicate a problem with potential adverse impact at WNP-2, appropriate actions will be taken.

In addition to the efforts by SNP, the Supply System will conduct an inspection of 8x8 SNP fuel assemblies during the R8 refueling outage, scheduled for the spring of 1993. This inspection will include several fuel assemblies fabricated from cladding lots common to WNP-2 and Grand Gulf that are to be returned to the core for Cycle 9. The Supply System will also inspect selected discharged 8x8 SNP fuel assemblies with high exposures.

In summary, the Supply System will closely follow the SNP root cause investigation of the differential rod growth and implement any appropriate actions that may result from that effort. During the R8 refueling outage, an inspection will be performed of fuel bundles with clad from the batch common to Grand Gulf and fuel bundles, with high exposure, that are to be discharged. If these inspections identify an abnormal condition, appropriate action will be taken to ensure safe plant operation.

Sincerely,



G. C. Sorensen, Manager
Regulatory Programs (Mail Drop 280)

MGE/bk

cc: JB Martin - NRC RV
NS Reynolds - Winston & Strawn
WM Dean - NRC
DL Williams - BPA/399
NRC Site Inspector - 901A

1. The first part of the report is a general statement of the purpose and scope of the study.

2. The second part of the report is a description of the methods used in the study.

3. The third part of the report is a description of the results of the study.

4. The fourth part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study.

5. The fifth part of the report is a conclusion of the study.