

**From:** Habib, Donald  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 5, 2020 3:46 PM  
**To:** Kellenberger, Nicholas  
**Cc:** Roberts, Kelli Anne; Santos, Cayetano; Scarbrough, Thomas; Bailey, Stewart; Patton, Rebecca; Chamberlain, Amy Christine; Nolan, Ryan; Wagage, Hanry; Wittick, Brian; Beaton, Robert; Borromeo, Joshua; Hall, Victor; Leighty, Steven  
**Subject:** Vogtle Units 3 and 4, LAR 19-017, Removal of the Preoperational PRHR Natural Circulation Test, NRC Staff Acceptance

Mr. Brian H. Whitley, Director  
Regulatory Affairs  
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.  
3535 Colonnade Parkway  
BIN B237  
Birmingham, AL 35243

**SUBJECT:** ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY'S VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4 REQUEST FOR LICENSE AMENDMENT: REMOVAL OF THE PREOPERATIONAL PASSIVE RESIDUAL HEAT REMOVAL HEAT EXCHANGER NATURAL CIRCULATION TEST (LAR-19-017R1) (EPID NO. L-2019-LLA-0194)

Dear Mr. Whitley:

By letter dated September 6, 2019 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML19249C739), as supplemented by letter dated January 31, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20031E665), Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) submitted a request for a license amendment to Combined License (COL) Numbers NPF-91 and NPF-92, for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Units 3 and 4, respectively. The requested amendment proposes to remove the natural circulation test of the passive residual heat removal (PRHR) heat exchanger conducted during preoperational testing from the scope of the initial test program. In lieu of performing this test according to Inspections, Tests, Analyses, and Acceptance Criteria (ITAAC) 2.2.03.08b.01, the ITAAC would be updated to reflect the heat removal performance test of the PRHR heat exchanger under forced flow conditions.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission 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 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 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 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 staff has reviewed your application and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the 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 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 staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence.

SNC has requested staff approval of this LAR by March 20, 2020. The staff intends to complete this action by November 5, 2020. However, the staff will try to expedite its review to have it completed by March 20, 2020, unless we agree to a different date at a later time due to circumstances beyond our control. The staff estimates that it may take 870 hours to complete this licensing action.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-1035 or [Donald.Habib@nrc.gov](mailto:Donald.Habib@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

Donald Habib, Project Manager  
Vogtle Project Office  
Office of New Reactors

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

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**Subject:** Vogtle Units 3 and 4, LAR 19-017, Removal of the Preoperational PRHR Natural Circulation Test, NRC Staff Acceptance  
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**From:** Habib, Donald

**Created By:** Donald.Habib@nrc.gov

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