



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

January 4, 1993

Docket Nos. 50-361
and 50-362

Mr. Harold B. Ray
Senior Vice President
Southern California Edison Co.
Irvine Operations Center
23 Parker Street
Irvine, California 92718

Mr. Edwin A. Guiles
Vice President
Engineering and Operations
San Diego Gas & Electric Co.
101 Ash Street
San Diego, California 92112

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF EXIDE BATTERIES AT SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING
STATION, UNITS 2 AND 3 (TAC NOS. M85091 AND M85092)

San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, Units 2 and 3 has experienced problems with Exide batteries. Specifically, some jars of three of the Class 1E 125 VDC safety-related station battery banks for Units 2 and 3 have cracked covers. Southern California Edison (SCE) has disconnected the affected cells of the jars with cracking covers and the batteries remain operable. To eliminate the problem with cracking jar covers, SCE has decided to expeditiously replace these three battery banks with a new Exide battery design that is not subject to this cracking phenomenon (the other five safety-related station batteries for Units 2 and 3 are of the new Exide battery design).

In a letter to the staff dated November 20, 1992, SCE provided the details of the planned replacement of the one Unit 2 safety-related battery bank and the two Unit 3 safety-related battery banks containing cracked jar covers during normal power operation. This replacement process will involve the installation of a temporary battery bank near the battery rooms (in the east end of fire area 2-AC-50-29) that will serve as a replacement safety-related battery during the period when each of the battery banks with cracked jar covers are being replaced.

The only issue requiring prior staff approval before the battery replacement can be accomplished is the need to temporarily depart from a previously approved deviation from 10 CFR 50, Appendix R, Section III.G.2, for fire area 2-AC-50-29. The staff had previously approved the requested deviation for this area, Deviation Request No. 8, by SER dated June 29, 1988.

The revised Deviation Request No. 8, attached to the SCE November 20, 1992 letter, delineates the actions that will be taken to compensate for the reduced margins in cable separation that will occur during the periods when the temporary battery acts as a safety-related battery for one or the other unit. The staff finds that the planned compensatory measures, in particular the use of continuous and one-hour

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fire watches during specific plant modifications, provide an adequate level of fire protection during the period when the batteries with cracked covers are replaced. The staff concludes, therefore, that the conditions and compensatory actions described in the revised Deviation Request No. 8 are acceptable deviations from C.5.b.(2) of Branch Technical Position CMEB 9.5.1. Once the batteries with cracked jars have been replaced, the licensee has committed to restore the plant configuration to the configuration described in the original Deviation Request No. 8.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Mel B. Fields, Project Manager
Project Directorate V
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: See next page

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Docket File

JRoe

MFields

ACRS (10), P315

NRC & Local PDRs

MVirgilio

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PDV Reading File

TQuay

OGC, 15B18

KPerkins, RV

Revised by original by LA. Correction made

SW 12/10/92

OFC	PDV/LA	PDV/PM	BC/SPLB	PDV/D
NAME	DFoster	MFields	CMcCracken	TQuay
DATE	12/10/92	12/10/92	1/4/93	1/4/93

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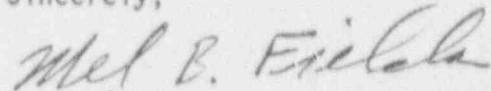
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Messrs. Ray and Guiles

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mel B. Fields".

Mel B. Fields, Project Manager
Project Directorate V
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: See next page

Messrs. Ray and Guiles
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