

**North
Atlantic**

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The Northeast Utilities System

June 19, 1997
Docket No. 50-443
NYN-97069

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attention: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Seabrook Station
License Amendment Request 97-03
"Technical Specification 6.8.1.6.b - Core Operating Limits Report"

North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (North Atlantic) has enclosed herein License Amendment Request (LAR) 97-03. License Amendment Request 97-03 is submitted pursuant to the requirements of 10 CFR 50.90 and 10 CFR 50.4. North Atlantic requests that LAR 97-03 be reviewed on an emergency basis pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(a)(5) and that a license amendment be issued to support the impending startup from the current refueling outage (i.e., MODE 2) on an emergency basis. North Atlantic is presently in MODE 5 ascending, at the completion of Refueling Outage 5, with the current best estimate for achieving criticality (MODE 2) on June 23, 1997. It should be noted, however, that North Atlantic believes that there are opportunities available to improve on this schedule which may result in MODE 2 being achieved earlier than June 23, 1997. North Atlantic will continue to keep the NRC apprised of schedule changes that may result in MODE 2 being achieved earlier than June 23, 1997.

License Amendment Request 97-03 proposes to include an additional reference in Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b, "Core Operating Limits Report." Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b specifies the NRC-approved methodologies used to determine the parameters specified in the Core Operating Limits Report. Specifically, the proposed change revises Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b to include a reference to an NRC approved Westinghouse topical report, WCAP-12610-P-A, "VANTAGE + Fuel Assembly Reference Core Report," dated April 1995. WCAP-12610-P-A describes the modifications in the Westinghouse Loss of Coolant Accident (LOCA) evaluation models which account for the presence of and the properties of ZIRLO cladding material.

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In order to prevent delay in startup of Seabrook Station, North Atlantic requests that LAR 97-03 be reviewed on an emergency basis pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(a)(5). The circumstances supporting North Atlantic's request for an emergency review are discussed below.

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North Atlantic submitted LAR 93-18 on November 23, 1993¹, and received NRC approval in License Amendment 33 on November 23, 1994². Amendment 33 approved a revision to the Technical Specifications to permit operation of Seabrook Station with an expanded axial flux difference band (wide-band operation). Other Technical Specification changes were also made to allow for fuel design enhancements. Additionally, Technical Specification 6.8.1.6.b was revised to include an updated list of analytical methods used to determine the core operating limits that were previously reviewed and approved by the NRC. At that time, the need to include a reference to WCAP-12610-P-A in this Technical Specification was not recognized.

On June 18, 1997, in a conference call, the NRC Staff requested that Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b specifically reference WCAP-12610-P-A as a methodology used to determine the core operating limits. This methodology has been previously reviewed and approved by the NRC. As a result, North Atlantic is submitting LAR 97-03 on an emergency basis. The proposed change to Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b is to ensure completeness in the listing of methodologies referenced to support the core operating limits. The omission of this reference from LAR 93-18 did not in any way adversely affect the analyses supporting Amendment 33. All analyses supporting the core operating limits were performed utilizing NRC approved methodologies. The proposed change is administrative in nature and has no safety significance.

North Atlantic believes that the proposed change to Technical Specification Administrative Control 6.8.1.6.b has no safety significance. The review of this amendment request as an emergency situation is justified considering the importance of resuming power operation at Seabrook Station expeditiously. As a result of the June 18, 1997 conference call, this amendment request was expeditiously prepared to be responsive to the NRC Staff.

LAR 97-03 has been reviewed and approved by the Station Operation Review Committee and the Nuclear Safety Audit Review Committee.

As discussed in LAR 97-03, Section IV, the proposed change does not involve a significant hazard consideration pursuant to 10 CFR 50.92. A copy of this letter and the enclosed LAR have been sent by facsimile to the New Hampshire State Liaison Officer pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(b).

North Atlantic has determined that LAR 97-03 meets the criteria of 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9) for a categorical exclusion from the requirements for an Environmental Impact Statement (see Section VI enclosed).

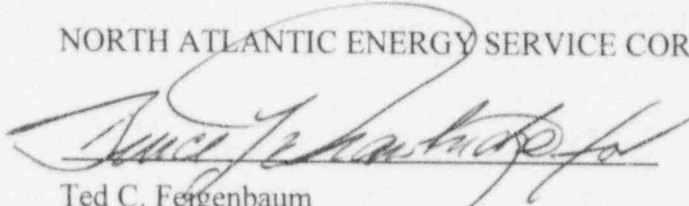
¹ "License Amendment Request 93-18" dated November 23, 1993, NYN-93160, T.C. Feigenbaum to USNRC

² "Amendment No. 33 to Facility Operating License NPF-86: Wide-Band Operation and Core Enhancements - License Amendment Request 93-18 (TAC M87849)

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Terry L. Harpster, Director of Licensing Services, at (603) 773-7765.

Very truly yours,

NORTH ATLANTIC ENERGY SERVICE CORP.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ted C. Fergenbaum", is written over a horizontal line.

Ted C. Fergenbaum
Executive Vice President
and Chief Nuclear Officer

cc: H. J. Miller, NRC Regional Administrator
A. W. De Agazio, NRC Project Manager
W. T. Olsen, NRC Senior Resident Inspector

Mr. George L. Iverson, Director
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