

Distribution

MAR 9 1976

Docket Nos. 50-275
and 50-323

Mr. Vincent A. Hill
330 Pinal
Orcutt, California 93454

✓ Docket File
NRC PDR
Local PDR
NRR Reading (M. Groff)
LWR #3
BRusche
EGCase
JMiller
HDenton
RHeineman
VStello
RSBoyd
DAllison
EGoulbourne
ELD

GErtter (# 9872)
JCook
MGroff
EHughes
SHill
IE (3)
LWR Branch Chiefs
WRoss
WHaass
RCDeYoung
SECY Mail Facility (3)
(#76-1275)

Dear Mr. Hill:

Your letter of February 20, 1976 has been referred to me for reply. Your letter expressed opposition to allowing the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant to operate close to a major active fault and informed us of a cooling tank malfunction.

First, let me say that there is currently no significant risk to the public health and safety associated with earthquakes at the Diablo Canyon site. The reactors have never operated and do not have operating licenses. Pacific Gas and Electric Company does have a license for storage of new reactor fuel at the site. The Commission's staff has evaluated this new fuel storage and determined that it involves no significant risk even if an earthquake should occur which is much more severe than those considered in the plant's design.

With regard to an operating license, it must be established that the plant is adequately designed to withstand earthquakes which could occur at the site before an operating license can be issued. The Commission's staff is currently evaluating the operating license application and has not yet made final conclusions concerning the seismic design of the plant. The enclosure provides further details concerning this evaluation. I can assure you that all actions necessary to ensure an acceptable level of safety will be required before an operating license can be issued.

With regard to the cooling tank malfunction you mentioned, we have checked with the Commission's inspectors in California. The malfunction which you described is apparently an instance where the water level in the spent fuel storage pool was lowered six inches below the level required by the fuel storage license for a short period of time. The spent fuel storage pool is currently being used to store the new fuel discussed above. This event had no effect on public health and safety, but it has been reported to the Commission and corrective action to prevent a recurrence will be

taken.					
OFFICE					
SURNAME					
DATE					

[Handwritten signature]
[Handwritten initials]

Mr. Vincent A. Hill

- 2 -

I trust you will find this information responsive to your concerns.

Sincerely,
C.

Original signed by R. C. DeYoung

R. C. DeYoung, Assistant Director
for Light water Reactors
Division of Project Management

Enclosure:
Diablo Canyon Seismic
Evaluation

m3,14

OFFICE ➤	DPM:LWR #3	DPM:LWR #3	DPM:A/D			
SURNAME ➤	DALLison:mjf	ODPar	RCDYoung			
DATE ➤	3/4/76	3/5/76	3/8/76			

ENCLOSURE

DIABLO CANYON SEISMIC DESIGN EVALUATION

The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant is located on the coast about 12 miles from San Luis Obispo, California. Construction is nearly completed for the first of the two units at this site. The owner, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, applied for an operating license in 1973. The Commission's staff is currently evaluating the operating license application. This evaluation, which is now nearing completion, has been delayed nearly two years by considerations associated with the Hosgri fault.

Construction permits were issued in 1968 and 1970 for Units 1 and 2, respectively, at the Diablo Canyon site. Based on the investigations conducted at that time the plant was designed to withstand the following earthquakes:

- (1) A great earthquake of magnitude 8.5 along the San Andreas fault 48 miles from the plant.
- (2) A major earthquake of magnitude 7.25 along the Nacimiento fault 20 miles from the plant.
- (3) A major earthquake of magnitude 7.5 along the off-shore extension of the Santa Ynez fault 50 miles from the plant.
- (4) An aftershock of magnitude 6.75 not associated with a known fault 0 miles from the plant.

After the construction permits were issued, offshore investigations conducted by Shell Oil Company showed the existence of a fault which had previously been unmapped. This is the Hosgri fault which runs offshore from the vicinity of Point Sal on the south to Point San Simon on the north and passes within about 3 1/2 miles of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant at its closest approach.

Since the beginning of the operating license review, Pacific Gas and Electric Company has conducted additional investigations and submitted extensive information on the characteristics of the fault, its capabilities for producing earthquakes and the ability of the plant to withstand earthquakes which are more severe than those considered in the original design. The U. S. Geological Survey has also conducted extensive investigations concerning the characteristics and capabilities of the Hosgri fault. The staff has not yet made final conclusions on the capabilities of this fault for producing earthquakes or the acceptability of the plant's seismic design.

In evaluating these matters the staff has the assistance of its consultants, including the U. S. Geological Survey. When the staff's evaluation is completed these matters must be considered by other bodies before an operating license can be issued. They will first be evaluated by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. Then the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will hold public hearings near the plant site. At these hearings the Board will consider the evidence and recommendations presented by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the Commission's staff, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards and other parties, including the State of California and interested citizens, before making a decision concerning an operating license.

No. 76- 1275Logging Date 2/25/76

NRC SECRETARIAT

TO: ☐ Commissioner _____ Date 2/25/76
☒ Exec. Dir./Oper. _____ ☐ Gen. Counsel
☐ Cong. Liaison _____ ☐ Solicitor
☐ Public Affairs _____ ☐ Secretary
☐ _____

Incoming: Vincent A. Hill, 330 PINAL, Orcutt,
From: Ca. 93454

To: Commissioners Date 2/20

Subject: Proposed operation of nuclear plant in
Diablo Canyon.

☐ Prepare reply for signature of:

☐ Chairman

☐ Commissioner _____

☐ EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY

☐ Signature block omitted

☐ _____

☐ Return original of incoming with response

☒ For direct reply* **SUSPENSE: March 16**

☐ For appropriate action

☐ For information

☐ For recommendation

REC'D OF
Date 2/26/76
Time 11:00 AM

Remarks: Cy of incoming to Cmrs., D&SS.

2/27/76 White
For the Commission: _____

4/13/76 Send the 3 copies of reply to Secy Mail Facility

NRC-62

ACTION SLIP