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TSB1 - TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION BASES UNIT 1 MANUAL

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SSSES MANUAL

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Manual Title: TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION BASES UNIT 1 MANUAL

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B 3.4 REACTOR COOLANT SYSTEM (RCS)

B 3.4.1 Recirculation Loops Operating

BASES

BACKGROUND

The Reactor Coolant Recirculation System is designed to provide a forced coolant flow through the core to remove heat from the fuel. The forced coolant flow removes more heat from the fuel than would be possible with just natural circulation. The forced flow, therefore, allows operation at significantly higher power than would otherwise be possible. The recirculation system also controls reactivity over a wide span of reactor power by varying the recirculation flow rate to control the void content of the moderator. The Reactor Coolant Recirculation System consists of two recirculation pump loops external to the reactor vessel. These loops provide the piping path for the driving flow of water to the reactor vessel jet pumps. Each external loop contains one variable speed motor driven recirculation pump, a motor generator (MG) set to control pump speed and associated piping, jet pumps, valves, and instrumentation. The recirculation pump, piping, and valves are part of the reactor coolant pressure boundary and are located inside the drywell structure. The jet pumps are reactor vessel internals.

The recirculated coolant consists of saturated water from the steam separators and dryers that has been subcooled by incoming feedwater. This water passes down the annulus between the reactor vessel wall and the core shroud. A portion of the coolant flows from the vessel, through the two external recirculation loops, and becomes the driving flow for the jet pumps. Each of the two external recirculation loops discharges high pressure flow into an external manifold, from which individual recirculation inlet lines are routed to the jet pump risers within the reactor vessel. The remaining portion of the coolant mixture in the annulus becomes the suction flow for the jet pumps. This flow enters the jet pump at suction inlets and is accelerated by the driving flow. The drive flow and suction flow are mixed in the jet pump throat section. The total flow then passes through the jet pump diffuser section into the area below the core (lower plenum), gaining sufficient head in the process to drive the required flow upward through the core. The subcooled water enters the bottom of the fuel channels and contacts the fuel cladding, where heat is transferred to the coolant. As it rises, the coolant begins to boil, creating steam voids within the fuel channel that continue until the coolant exits the core. Because of reduced moderation, the steam voiding introduces negative reactivity that must be compensated for to maintain or to increase reactor power. The recirculation flow control allows operators to increase recirculation flow and sweep some of the voids from the fuel channel,

BASES

BACKGROUND (continued)

overcoming the negative reactivity void effect. Thus, the reason for having variable recirculation flow is to compensate for reactivity effects of boiling over a wide range of power generation without having to move control rods and disturb desirable flux patterns.

Each recirculation loop is manually started from the control room. The MG set provides regulation of individual recirculation loop drive flows. The flow in each loop is manually controlled.

APPLICABLE SAFETY ANALYSES

The operation of the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System is an initial condition assumed in the design basis loss of coolant accident (LOCA) (Ref. 1). During a LOCA caused by a recirculation loop pipe break, the intact loop is assumed to provide coolant flow during the first few seconds of the accident. The initial core flow decrease is rapid because the recirculation pump in the broken loop ceases to pump reactor coolant to the vessel almost immediately. The pump in the intact loop coasts down relatively slowly. This pump coastdown governs the core flow response for the next several seconds until the jet pump suction is uncovered (Ref. 1). The analyses assume that both loops are operating at the same flow prior to the accident. However, the LOCA analysis was reviewed for the case with a flow mismatch between the two loops, with the pipe break assumed to be in the loop with the higher flow. While the flow coastdown and core response are potentially more severe in this assumed case (since the intact loop starts at a lower flow rate and the core response is the same as if both loops were operating at a lower flow rate), a small mismatch has been determined to be acceptable based on engineering judgment. The recirculation system is also assumed to have sufficient flow coastdown characteristics to maintain fuel thermal margins during abnormal operational transients (Ref. 2), which are analyzed in Chapter 15 of the FSAR.

Plant specific LOCA analyses have been performed assuming only one operating recirculation loop. These analyses have demonstrated that, in the event of a LOCA caused by a pipe break in the operating recirculation loop, the Emergency Core Cooling System response will provide adequate core cooling, provided that the APLHGR limits for ATRIUM 10 and ATRIUM 11 fuel are modified.

BASES

APPLICABLE
SAFETY
ANALYSES
(continued)

The transient analyses of Chapter 15 of the FSAR have also been performed for single recirculation loop operation and demonstrate sufficient flow coastdown characteristics to maintain fuel thermal margins during the abnormal operational transients analyzed provided the MCPR requirements are modified. During single recirculation loop operation, modification to the Reactor Protection System (RPS) average power range monitor (APRM) instrument setpoints is also required to account for the different relationships between recirculation drive flow and reactor core flow. The APLHGR, LHGR, and MCPR limits for single loop operation are specified in the COLR. The APRM Simulated Thermal Power-High setpoint is in LCO 3.3.1.1, "Reactor Protection System (RPS) Instrumentation." In addition, a restriction on recirculation pump speed is incorporated to address reactor vessel internals vibration concerns and assumptions in the event analysis.

Recirculation loops operating satisfies Criterion 2 of the NRC Policy Statement (Ref. 5).

LCO

Two recirculation loops are required to be in operation with their flows matched within the limits specified in SR 3.4.1.1 to ensure that during a LOCA caused by a break of the piping of one recirculation loop the assumptions of the LOCA analysis are satisfied. With the limits specified in SR 3.4.1.1 not met, the recirculation loop with the lower flow must be considered not in operation. With only one recirculation loop in operation, modifications to the required APLGHR limits (LCO 3.2.1, "AVERAGE PLANAR LINEAR HEAT GENERATION RATE"), LHGR limits (LCO 3.2.3, "LINEAR HEAT GENERATION RATE (LHGR)"), MCPR limits (LCO 3.2.2, "MINIMUM CRITICAL POWER RATIO (MCPR)"), and APRM Simulated Thermal Power-High setpoint (LCO 3.3.1.1) may be applied to allow continued operation consistent with the safety analysis assumptions. Furthermore, restrictions are placed on recirculation pump speed to ensure the initial assumption of the event analysis are maintained.

The LCO is modified by a Note that allows up to 12 hours to establish the required limits and setpoints after a change from two recirculation loops operation to single recirculation loop operation. If the limits and setpoints are not in compliance with the applicable requirements at the end of this period, the ACTIONS required by the applicable specifications must be implemented. This time is provided to stabilize operation with one recirculation loop by: limiting flow in the operating loop, limiting total THERMAL POWER, monitor APRM and local power range monitor (LPRM) neutron flux noise levels; and, fully implementing and confirming the required limit and setpoint modifications.

BASES

APPLICABILITY In MODES 1 and 2, requirements for operation of the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System are necessary since there is considerable energy in the reactor core and the limiting design basis transients and accidents are assumed to occur.

In MODES 3, 4, and 5, the consequences of an accident are reduced and the coastdown characteristics of the recirculation loops are not important.

ACTIONS

A.1

When operating with no recirculation loops operating in MODE 1, the potential for thermal-hydraulic oscillations is greatly increased. Although this transient is protected for expected modes of oscillation by the OPRM system, when OPERABLE per LCO 3.3.1.1, Function 2.f (Reference 3, 4), the prudent response to the natural circulation condition is to preclude potential thermal-hydraulic oscillations by immediately placing the mode switch in the shutdown position.

B.1

Recirculation loop flow must match within required limits when both recirculation loops are in operation. If flow mismatch is not within required limits, matched flow must be restored within 2 hours. If matched flows are not restored, the recirculation loop with lower flow must be declared "not in operation." Should a LOCA occur with recirculation loop flow not matched, the core flow coastdown and resultant core response may not be bounded by the LOCA analyses. Therefore, only a limited time is allowed prior to imposing restrictions associated with single loop operation. Operation with only one recirculation loop satisfies the requirements of the LCO and the initial conditions of the accident sequence.

The 2 hour Completion Time is based on the low probability of an accident occurring during this time period, providing a reasonable time to complete the Required Action, and considering that frequent core monitoring by operators allows abrupt changes in core flow conditions to be quickly detected.

These Required Actions do not require tripping the recirculation pump in the lowest flow loop when the mismatch between total jet pump flows of the two loops is greater than the required limits. However, in cases where large flow mismatches occur, low flow or reverse flow can occur in the low flow loop jet pumps, causing vibration of the jet pumps. If zero or reverse flow is detected, the condition should be alleviated by changing

BASES

ACTIONS
(continued)

B.1 (continued)

recirculation pump speed to re-establish forward flow or by tripping the pump.

C.1

With no recirculation loops in operation while in MODE 2 or if after going to single loop operations the required limits and setpoints cannot be established, the plant must be brought to MODE 3, where the LCO does not apply within 12 hours. In this condition, the recirculation loops are not required to be operating because of the reduced severity of DBAs and minimal dependence on the recirculation loop coastdown characteristics. The allowed Completion Time of 12 hours is reasonable to reach MODE 3 from full power conditions in an orderly manner without challenging plant systems.

SURVEILLANCE
REQUIREMENTS

SR 3.4.1.1

This SR ensures the recirculation loops are within the allowable limits for mismatch. At low core flow (i.e., < 75 million lbm/hr), the MCPR requirements provide larger margins to the fuel cladding integrity Safety Limit such that the potential adverse effect of early boiling transition during a LOCA is reduced. A larger flow mismatch can therefore be allowed when core flow is < 75 million lbm/hr. The recirculation loop jet pump flow, as used in this Surveillance, is the summation of the flows from all of the jet pumps associated with a single recirculation loop.

The mismatch is measured in terms of core flow. If the flow mismatch exceeds the specified limits, the loop with the lower flow is considered inoperable. The SR is not required when both loops are not in operation since the mismatch limits are meaningless during single loop or natural circulation operation. The Surveillance Frequency is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

SR 3.4.1.2

As noted, this SR is only applicable when in single loop operation. This SR ensures the recirculation pump limit is maintained. The Surveillance Frequency is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

BASES

REFERENCES

1. FSAR, Section 6.3.3.7.
 2. FSAR, Section 5.4.1.4.
 3. GE NEDO-31960-A "BWROG Long Term Stability Solutions Licensing Methodology," November 1995.
 4. GE NEDO-31960-A "BWROG Long Term Stability Solutions Licensing Methodology, Supplement 1," November 1995.
 5. Final Policy Statement on Technical Specifications Improvements, July 22, 1993 (58 FR 39132).
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B 3.4 REACTOR COOLANT SYSTEM (RCS)

B 3.4.2 Jet Pumps

BASES

BACKGROUND

The Reactor Coolant Recirculation System is described in the Background section of the Bases for LCO 3.4.1, "Recirculation Loops Operating," which discusses the operating characteristics of the system and how these characteristics affect the Design Basis Accident (DBA) analyses.

The jet pumps are part of the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System and are designed to provide forced circulation through the core to remove heat from the fuel. The jet pumps are located in the annular region between the core shroud and the vessel inner wall. Because the jet pump suction elevation is at two-thirds core height, the vessel can be reflooded and coolant level maintained at two-thirds core height even with the complete break of the recirculation loop pipe that is located below the jet pump suction elevation.

Each reactor coolant recirculation loop contains ten jet pumps. Recirculated coolant passes down the annulus between the reactor vessel wall and the core shroud. A portion of the coolant flows from the vessel, through the two external recirculation loops, and becomes the driving flow for the jet pumps. Each of the two external recirculation loops discharges high pressure flow into an external manifold from which individual recirculation inlet lines are routed to the jet pump risers within the reactor vessel. The remaining portion of the coolant mixture in the annulus becomes the suction flow for the jet pumps. This flow enters the jet pump at suction inlets and is accelerated by the drive flow. The drive flow and suction flow are mixed in the jet pump throat section. The total flow then passes through the jet pump diffuser section into the area below the core (lower plenum), gaining sufficient head in the process to drive the required flow upward through the core.

APPLICABLE SAFETY ANALYSES

Jet pump OPERABILITY is an explicit assumption in the design basis loss of coolant accident (LOCA) analysis evaluated in Reference 1.

BASES

APPLICABLE SAFETY ANALYSES (continued)

The capability of reflooding the core to two-thirds core height is dependent upon the structural integrity of the jet pumps. If the structural system, including the beam holding a jet pump in place, fails, jet pump displacement and performance degradation could occur, resulting in an increased flow area through the jet pump and a lower core flooding elevation. This could adversely affect the water level in the core during the reflood phase of a LOCA as well as the assumed blowdown flow during a LOCA.

Jet pumps satisfy Criterion 2 of the NRC Policy Statement (Ref. 4).

LCO

The structural failure of any of the jet pumps could cause significant degradation in the ability of the jet pumps to allow reflooding to two-thirds core height during a LOCA. OPERABILITY of all jet pumps is required to ensure that operation of the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System will be consistent with the assumptions used in the licensing basis analysis (Ref. 1).

APPLICABILITY

In MODES 1 and 2, the jet pumps are required to be OPERABLE since there is a large amount of energy in the reactor core and since the limiting DBAs are assumed to occur in these MODES. This is consistent with the requirements for operation of the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System (LCO 3.4.1).

In MODES 3, 4, and 5, the Reactor Coolant Recirculation System is not required to be in operation, and when not in operation, sufficient flow is not available to evaluate jet pump OPERABILITY.

ACTIONS

A.1

An inoperable jet pump can increase the blowdown area and reduce the capability of reflooding during a design basis LOCA. If one or more of the jet pumps are inoperable, the plant must be brought to a MODE in which the LCO does not apply. To achieve this status, the plant must be brought to MODE 3 within 12 hours. The Completion Time of 12 hours is reasonable, based on operating experience, to reach MODE 3 from full power conditions in an orderly manner and without challenging plant systems.

BASES

SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS

SR 3.4.2.1

This SR is designed to detect significant degradation in jet pump performance that precedes jet pump failure (Ref. 2). This SR is required to be performed only when the loop has forced recirculation flow since surveillance checks and measurements can only be performed during jet pump operation. With no forced recirculation flow, stresses on jet pump assemblies are significantly reduced. The jet pump failure of concern is a complete mixer displacement due to jet pump beam failure. Jet pump plugging is also of concern since it adds flow resistance to the recirculation loop. Significant degradation is indicated if the specified criteria confirm unacceptable deviations from established patterns or relationships. The allowable deviations from the established patterns have been developed based on the variations experienced at plants during normal operation and with jet pump assembly failures (Refs. 2 and 3). Each recirculation loop must satisfy two of the performance criteria provided. Since refueling activities (fuel assembly replacement or shuffle, as well as any modifications to fuel support orifice size or core plate bypass flow) can affect the relationship between core flow, jet pump flow, and recirculation loop flow, these relationships may need to be re-established each cycle. Similarly, initial entry into extended single loop operation may also require establishment of these relationships. During the initial weeks of operation under such conditions, while base-lining new "established patterns," engineering judgment of the daily surveillance results is used to detect significant abnormalities, which could indicate a jet pump failure.

The recirculation pump speed operating characteristics (loop drive flow versus pump speed) are determined by the flow resistance from the loop suction through the jet pump nozzles. A change in the relationship indicates a plug, flow restriction, loss in pump hydraulic performance, leakage, or new flow path between the recirculation pump discharge and jet pump nozzle. For this criterion, loop drive flow versus pump speed relationship must be verified. Note that recirculation pump speed is directly proportional to recirculation motor generator speed (Reference 5). Therefore, recirculation motor generator speed can be used for the purposes of this surveillance.

Individual jet pumps in a recirculation loop normally do not have the same flow. The unequal flow is due to the drive flow manifold, which does not distribute flow equally to all risers. The flow (or jet pump diffuser to lower plenum differential pressure) pattern or relationship of one jet pump to the loop average is repeatable. An appreciable change in this relationship is an indication that increased (or reduced) resistance has occurred in one of the jet pumps. This may be indicated by an increase in the relative flow for a jet pump that has experienced beam cracks.

BASES

SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

SR 3.4.2.1 (continued)

The deviations from normal are considered indicative of a potential problem in the recirculation drive flow or jet pump system (Ref. 2). Normal flow ranges and established jet pump flow and differential pressure patterns are established by plotting historical data as discussed in Reference 2.

The Surveillance Frequency is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

This SR is modified by two Notes. If this SR has not been performed in the previous 24 hours at the time an idle recirculation loop is restored to service, Note 1 allows 4 hours after the idle recirculation loop is in operation before the SR must be completed because these checks can only be performed during jet pump operation. The 4 hours is an acceptable time to establish conditions and complete data collection and evaluation.

Note 2 allows deferring completion of this SR until 24 hours after THERMAL POWER is greater than 23% of RTP. During low flow conditions, jet pump noise approaches the threshold response of the associated flow instrumentation and precludes the collection of repeatable and meaningful data.

REFERENCES

1. FSAR, Section 6.3.
 2. GE Service Information Letter No. 330, June 9, 1990.
 3. NUREG/CR-3052, November 1984.
 4. Final Policy Statement on Technical Specifications Improvements, July 22, 1993 (58 FR 39132).
 5. FSAR, Section 7.7.
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