

March 1, 2000

Mr. Randall K. Edington
Vice President - Operations
Entergy Operations, Inc.
River Bend Station
P. O. Box 220
St. Francisville, LA 70775

SUBJECT: RIVER BEND STATION, UNIT 1 - RE: COMPLETION OF LICENSING ACTION FOR NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION BULLETIN 96-03, "POTENTIAL PLUGGING OF EMERGENCY CORE COOLING SUCTION STRAINERS BY DEBRIS IN BOILING-WATER REACTORS," DATED MAY 6, 1996 (TAC NO. M96171)

Dear Mr. Edington:

On May 6, 1996, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin (BL) 96-03, "Potential Plugging of Emergency Core Cooling Suction Strainers by Debris in Boiling-Water Reactors" to all holders of operating licenses or construction permits for boiling water reactors (BWRs). The NRC issued BL 96-03 to ensure that the Emergency Core Cooling Systems (ECCS) in BWRs can perform their intended safety function to mitigate the effects of a postulated loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA). The bulletin provided three options for resolving this issue, including (1) installation of large capacity passive strainer design, (2) installation of a self-cleaning strainer, or (3) installation of a backflush system.

In BL 96-03, the NRC staff specifically requested that licensees submit reports containing the following information for each of their facilities:

1. A description of planned actions and mitigative strategies to be used, the schedule for implementation, and proposed technical specifications, if appropriate.
2. A report confirming completion and summarizing actions taken.

In response to BL 96-03, you provided a letter dated November 4, 1996, for River Bend Station, Unit 1 (RBS). The letter stated that RBS planned to install large capacity passive strainers which would be designed using the guidance from the BWR Owners Group Utility Resolution Guidance (URG). The NRC staff reviewed the URG and issued a safety evaluation (SE) on August 20, 1998. By letter dated November 20, 1997, you informed the staff that you had completed all actions requested by the bulletin. These actions included installation of (1) the "stacked disk" suction strainer, and (2) the new suppression pool cleanup system.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response and has determined that the actions taken should minimize the potential for the clogging of ECCS suction strainers and ensure the capability of the ECCS to provide long-term cooling following a LOCA, as required by 10 CFR 50.46. The NRC staff notes that General Electric's (GE's) Licensing Topical Report NEDC-32721P, "Application Methodology for GE Stacked Disk ECCS Suction Strainer," is still undergoing staff

review. Part I of the staff's SE of the topical report was issued on February 3, 1999, approving GE's methodology for determining strainer head loss. However, the GE methodology for calculating strainer and associated penetration structural loadings due to hydrodynamic forces is still under staff review. Part II of the NRC staff's SE will be issued upon completion of this review. Because the staff considers your actions responsive to the concerns raised in BL 96-03 and no plant-specific concerns have been identified, BL 96-03 is closed for RBS, Unit 1. Detailed reviews of your strainer design and 10 CFR 50.59 evaluation may be performed on a plant-specific basis in the future.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Robert J. Fretz, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-458

cc: See next page

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