

March 17, 2000

Mr. William T. Cottle  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
STP Nuclear Operating Company  
South Texas Project Electric  
Generating Station  
P. O. Box 289  
Wadsworth, TX 77483

SUBJECT: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2, RE: COMPLETION OF LICENSING ACTION FOR GENERIC LETTER 98-02, "LOSS OF REACTOR COOLANT INVENTORY AND ASSOCIATED POTENTIAL FOR LOSS OF EMERGENCY MITIGATION FUNCTION WHILE IN A SHUTDOWN CONDITION" (TAC NOS. MA4806 AND MA4807)

Dear Mr. Cottle:

On May 28, 1998, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Generic Letter (GL) 98-02 to all holders of operating licenses for Pressurized Water Reactors (PWR), except those who have permanently ceased operations, and have certified that fuel has been permanently removed from the reactor vessel. The NRC issued GL 98-02 to request that PWR licensees evaluate a September 17, 1994, event, which occurred at Wolf Creek, which had the potential to draindown the reactor coolant system (RCS) to the refueling water storage tank (RWST) and, at the same time, render the emergency core cooling system (ECCS) and residual heat removal (RHR) system inoperable by introducing a steam/water mixture to the suction side of the ECCS and RHR pumps. Addressees of GL 98-02 were requested to provide the following information within 180 days: (1) an assessment of whether the addressee's facility is vulnerable to the September 17, 1994, Wolf Creek event, and (2), if the facility is found to be vulnerable, an assessment of the plant-specific 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix B, quality assurance program attributes which will prevent the subject event. If the addressee's facility was determined to be vulnerable, a response to information item (1) was to be provided pursuant to 10 CFR 50.54(f) and 10 CFR 50.4, and the responses to information items (1) and (2) were to be kept in a licensee's retrievable system for use by the NRC staff on an as-needed basis.

In response to GL 98-02, you provided a letter dated November 18, 1998, for South Texas Project (STP), Units 1 and 2. The submittal indicated that STP, Units 1 and 2, were vulnerable to the type of incident which occurred at Wolf Creek and further indicated that the plant evaluation concerning the subject vulnerability (information item (2) of GL 98-02), was being kept in a retrievable licensee system that the NRC can verify on an as-needed or sample basis, in accordance with GL 98-02.

By letter dated December 2, 1999, the Region IV NRC staff issued NRC Inspection Report No. 50-498/99-18; 50-499/99-18. The subject inspection report contained details of the NRC staff's on-site verification of activities which you undertook in response to GL 98-02 for STP, Units 1 and 2. Specifically, the inspector verified that the licensee had effectively implemented administrative controls, configuration management, and operating procedures to preclude an inadvertent draindown event as described in GL 98-02. STP, Units 1 and 2 utilize three trains of RHR and ECCS. The high head safety injection pumps, low head safety injection pumps, and containment spray pumps take suction from a common header connected to the refueling water storage tank, each with their own isolation valves. The RHR pumps do not take suction from this header. RHR Trains B and C share a cross-connect on the discharge side of the pumps for reactor cavity draindown. Each of these trains include two normally locked closed containment insulation valves on the drain line. The above measures were found by the inspector to be appropriate.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response to GL 98-02 and has concluded that (1) all the information requested by GL 98-02 has been provided, and (2) that your on-site activities adequately addressed the concerns of GL 98-02 for STP, Units 1 and 2; therefore, we consider GL 98-02 to be closed for STP, Units 1 and 2.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

John A. Nakoski, Senior Project Manager, Section 1  
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning  
Division of Licensing Project Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 50-499

cc: See next page

South Texas, Units 1 & 2

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The NRC staff has reviewed your response to GL 98-02 and has concluded that (1) all the information requested by GL 98-02 has been provided, and (2) that your on-site activities adequately addressed the concerns of GL 98-02 for STP, Units 1 and 2; therefore, we consider GL 98-02 to be closed for STP, Units 1 and 2.

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

John A. Nakoski, Senior Project Manager, Section 1  
 Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning  
 Division of Licensing Project Management  
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 50-499

cc: See next page

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