



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

June 30, 2014

Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano
Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer
Southern California Edison Company
San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
P.O. Box 128
San Clemente, CA 92674-0128

SUBJECT: SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 2 AND 3 –
RESCISSION OF ORDER EA-12-051, “ORDER MODIFYING LICENSES WITH
REGARD TO RELIABLE SPENT FUEL POOL INSTRUMENTATION”
(TAC NOS. MF0917 AND MF0918)

Dear Mr. Palmisano:

By letter dated March 12, 2012 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML12054A679), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Order EA-12-051 to Southern California Edison Company (SCE or the licensee), requiring certain actions at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Units 2 and 3 associated with the Fukushima Near-Term Task Force Recommendations. Order EA-12-051 requires that reliable spent fuel pool (SFP) instrumentation be installed and maintained.

Section IV of Order EA-12-051 required that SCE submit an overall integrated plan by February 28, 2013, describing how SCE planned to achieve compliance with the requirements of the Order. SCE responded to the Order by letter dated February 27, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No: ML13064A353).

Section IV of the Order also provided the NRC’s Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation the authority to relax or rescind any or all of the conditions of the Order upon demonstration by the licensee of good cause.

By letter dated June 12, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No. ML131640201), SCE submitted a certification to the NRC indicating it had permanently ceased power operations at SONGS, Units 2 and 3, effective June 7, 2013. By letter dated June 28, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No. ML13183A391), SCE certified that it had permanently defueled Unit 3 on October 5, 2012. By letter dated July 22, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No. ML13204A304), SCE certified that it had permanently defueled Unit 2 on July 18, 2013.


By letter dated August 26, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No. ML13240A130), SCE requested full relaxation of Order EA-12-051 for SONGS Units 2 and 3 based on the decay time of the irradiated fuel in the SONGS Units 2 and 3 SFPs together with implementation of alternative SFP level indication. Subsequently, by letter dated September 30, 2013 (ADAMS Accession No. ML13276A019), SCE requested rescission of Order EA-12-051 for SONGS Units 2 and 3 based on the decommissioning status of the plant.

Section III of the Order states that the Commission determined that all power reactor licensees and construction permit holders must have a reliable means of remotely monitoring wide-range SFP levels to support effective prioritization of event mitigation and recovery actions in the event of a beyond-design-basis external event. This statement forms the basis of the Order and reflects the need to effectively deploy limited resources to mitigate very low frequency events with the potential to challenge both the reactor and SFP. With reliable indication of the SFP coolant level, decision-makers can determine when to deploy resources to the SFP and avoid unnecessary deployment of staff to monitor pool level.

Since the licensee for SONGS Units 2 and 3 has certified the permanent removal of the fuel from the SONGS Units 2 and 3 reactor vessels, the safety of the fuel in the SFP becomes the primary safety function for site personnel. In the event of a challenge to the safety of fuel stored in the SFP, decision-makers would not have to prioritize actions and the focus of the staff would be the SFP condition. Thus, the basis for the Order no longer applies to the configuration of SONGS Units 2 and 3.

Therefore, for reasons discussed above, the NRC staff concludes that good cause has been demonstrated to rescind the Order. All other regulatory requirements for which rescission were not specifically requested remain applicable and are not impacted by rescission of this Order. Accordingly, based upon the authority granted to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Order EA-12-051 is rescinded in its entirety for SONGS Units 2 and 3.

Sincerely,



Eric J. Leeds, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-361 and 50-362

cc: Listserv

Section III of the Order states that the Commission determined that all power reactor licensees and construction permit holders must have a reliable means of remotely monitoring wide-range SFP levels to support effective prioritization of event mitigation and recovery actions in the event of a beyond-design-basis external event. This statement forms the basis of the Order and reflects the need to effectively deploy limited resources to mitigate very low frequency events with the potential to challenge both the reactor and SFP. With reliable indication of the SFP coolant level, decision-makers can determine when to deploy resources to the SFP and avoid unnecessary deployment of staff to monitor pool level.

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Sincerely,
/RA/
 Eric J. Leeds, Director
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-361 and 50-362

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ADAMS Accession No. ML14111A069

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