

applicability of the following NSHC determination in its application dated March 19, 2003.

*Basis for proposed no significant hazards consideration determination:* As required by Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) section 50.91(a), an analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration is presented below:

Criterion 1—The Proposed Change Does Not Involve a Significant Increase in the Probability or Consequences of an Accident Previously Evaluated

The PASS was originally designed to perform many sampling and analysis functions. These functions were designed and intended to be used in post accident situations and were put into place as a result of the TMI-2 accident. The specific intent of the PASS was to provide a system that has the capability to obtain and analyze samples of plant fluids containing potentially high levels of radioactivity, without exceeding plant personnel radiation exposure limits. Analytical results of these samples would be used largely for verification purposes in aiding the plant staff in assessing the extent of core damage and subsequent offsite radiological dose projections. The system was not intended to and does not serve a function for preventing accidents and its elimination would not affect the probability of accidents previously evaluated.

In the 20 years since the TMI-2 accident and the consequential promulgation of post accident sampling requirements, operating experience has demonstrated that a PASS provides little actual benefit to post accident mitigation. Past experience has indicated that there exists in-plant instrumentation and methodologies available in lieu of a PASS for collecting and assimilating information needed to assess core damage following an accident. Furthermore, the implementation of Severe Accident Management Guidance (SAMG) emphasizes accident management strategies based on in-plant instruments. These strategies provide guidance to the plant staff for mitigation and recovery from a severe accident. Based on current severe accident management strategies and guidelines, it is determined that the PASS provides little benefit to the plant staff in coping with an accident.

The regulatory requirements for the PASS can be eliminated without degrading the plant emergency response. The emergency response, in this sense, refers to the methodologies used in ascertaining the condition of the reactor core, mitigating the consequences of an accident, assessing and projecting offsite releases of radioactivity, and establishing protective action recommendations to be communicated to offsite authorities. The elimination of the PASS will not prevent an accident management strategy that meets the initial intent of the post-TMI-2 accident guidance through the use of the SAMGs, the emergency plan (EP), the emergency operating procedures (EOP), and site survey monitoring that support modification of emergency plan protective action recommendations (PARs).

Therefore, the elimination of PASS requirements from Technical Specifications (TS) (and other elements of the licensing bases) does not involve a significant increase in the consequences of any accident previously evaluated.

Criterion 2—The Proposed Change Does Not Create the Possibility of a New or Different Kind of Accident From Any Previously Evaluated.

The elimination of PASS related requirements will not result in any failure mode not previously analyzed. The PASS was intended to allow for verification of the extent of reactor core damage and also to provide an input to offsite dose projection calculations. The PASS is not considered an accident precursor, nor does its existence or elimination have any adverse impact on the pre-accident state of the reactor core or post accident confinement of radioisotopes within the containment building.

Therefore, this change does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated.

Criterion 3—The Proposed Change Does Not Involve a Significant Reduction in the Margin of Safety

The elimination of the PASS, in light of existing plant equipment, instrumentation, procedures, and programs that provide effective mitigation of and recovery from reactor accidents, results in a neutral impact to the margin of safety. Methodologies that are not reliant on PASS are designed to provide rapid assessment of current reactor core conditions and the direction of degradation while effectively responding to the event in order to mitigate the consequences of the accident. The use of a PASS is redundant and does not provide quick recognition of core events or rapid response to events in progress. The intent of the requirements established as a result of the TMI-2 accident can be adequately met without reliance on a PASS.

Therefore, this change does not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety.

The NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

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*Entergy Operations, Inc., System Energy Resources, Inc., South Mississippi Electric Power Association, and Entergy Mississippi, Inc., Docket No. 50-416, Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, Unit 1, Claiborne County, Mississippi*

*Date of amendment request:* May 8, 2003.

*Description of amendment request:* The proposed amendment would change Technical Specification (TS) 3.3.6.1, "Primary Containment and Drywell Isolation Instrumentation," to add a note allowing intermittent

opening of penetration flow paths, under administrative control, that are isolated to comply with TS ACTIONS and to revise the operability requirement for the Reactor Core Isolation Cooling (RCIC) steam supply line low pressure isolation instrumentation to be consistent with the RCIC system operability requirements.

*Basis for proposed no significant hazards consideration determination:* As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

1. Does the proposed change involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated?

*Response:* No.

The proposed change to adopt TSTF [Technical Specification Task Force]-306 allows primary containment and drywell isolation valves to be unisolated under administrative controls when the associated isolation instrumentation is not operable. The isolation function is an accident mitigating function and is not an initiator of an accident previously evaluated. Administrative controls are required to be in effect when the valves are unisolated so that the penetration can be rapidly isolated when the need [for isolation] is indicated. Therefore the probability or consequences of previously evaluated accidents are not significantly increased.

The proposed change also allows the RCIC turbine steam line low pressure containment isolation instrumentation to be inoperable during low startup operating pressures. These instruments primarily provide automatic isolation when steam line pressure is too low for RCIC turbine operation. The low pressure automatic isolation feature will only be unavailable during the time that the RCIC system is not required to be operable. Therefore the change does not adversely affect the ability of the RCIC system to perform its safety function.

The RCIC steam line low pressure instruments also provide a diverse signal to indicate a possible system break. Even though the low pressure automatic isolation function will not be available for a short period during plant startup, the likelihood of a steam line break during the short period of time is low due to the low operating pressure. In addition, the safety function of providing containment integrity is maintained since there are other diverse leak detection instruments as well as other barriers or isolation capabilities that provide the isolation function.

Therefore, the proposed change does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

2. Does the proposed change create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated?

*Response:* No.