

November 5, 2002

Mr. John L. Skolds, President
Exelon Nuclear
Exelon Generation Company, LLC
4300 Winfield Road
Warrenville, IL 60555

SUBJECT: BYRON STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2 - RESPONSE TO NRC BULLETIN 2002-02,
"REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL HEAD AND VESSEL HEAD PENETRATION
NOZZLE INSPECTION PROGRAMS" (TAC NOS. MB5876
AND MB5877)

Dear Mr. Skolds:

On August 9, 2002, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin 2002-02, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head and Vessel Head Penetration Nozzle Inspection Programs." The Bulletin requested addressees to provide information related to their reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head and vessel head penetration (VHP) nozzle inspection programs for their respective facilities, including a summary discussion of inspection program plans to supplement their required visual inspections with non-visual nondestructive examination methods, or justification for reliance on visual examinations as the primary method to detect degradation. Addressees were requested to respond to Item 1 of the Bulletin within 30 days of its issuance, or within 15 days of its issuance, to provide an alternative course of action, including the basis for acceptability of the proposed action.

By letter dated September 11, 2002, Exelon Generation Company, LLC (Exelon) provided a response to Item 1 of the Bulletin, indicating the plans to perform RPV head and VHP nozzle inspections at Byron Station, Units 1 and 2. The response also indicated that Byron Station, Units 1 and 2 are in the category of plants considered to have low susceptibility to RPV head and VHP cracking, based on a susceptibility ranking of less than eight effective degradation years.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response to Item 1 of the Bulletin. The staff finds your immediate inspection plan to perform a 100 percent bare metal visual examination during the September 2003, Byron Station, Unit 1 outage and the Byron Station, Unit 2 refueling outage, completed in October 2002, to be adequate for providing reasonable assurance that existing regulatory requirements will be met.

The staff notes that your justification for reliance on visual examinations and long-term inspection plans refer to the Electric Power Research Institute Materials Reliability Program (MRP) inspection plan for PWR RPV upper head penetrations. The staff has not completed its review of the MRP inspection plan and, as such, has not made a determination on the adequacy of the plan for ensuring applicable regulatory requirements are met. The staff's assessment of your justification and the adequacy of your long-term inspection program plans will be determined upon completion of the staff's review of the MRP inspection plan.

John L. Skolds

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Also, please note that as stated in Item 2 of Bulletin 2002-02, you are to report your inspection scope and results to the Commission within 30 days after plant restart following the inspection of the RPV head and VHP nozzles.

Please contact me at (301) 415-8371 if you have any questions on this issue.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Mahesh Chawla, Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. STN 50-454 and STN 50-455

cc: See next page

Byron Station Units 1 and 2

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Sincerely,

/RA/

Mahesh Chawla, Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate 3
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. STN 50-454 and STN 50-455

cc: See next page

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