



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

September 23, 2015

Mr. Oscar A. Limpas  
Vice President-Nuclear and CNO  
Nebraska Public Power District  
Cooper Nuclear Station  
72676 648A Avenue  
P.O. Box 98  
Brownville, NE 68321

SUBJECT: COOPER NUCLEAR STATION – STAFF REVIEW OF INTERIM EVALUATION  
ASSOCIATED WITH REEVALUATED SEISMIC HAZARD IMPLEMENTING  
NEAR-TERM TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION 2.1 (TAC NO. MF5235)

Dear Mr. Limpas:

By letter dated March 12, 2012 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML12053A340), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a request for information pursuant to Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 50, Section 50.54(f) (hereafter referred to as the 50.54(f) letter). The request was issued as part of implementing lessons-learned from the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. Enclosure 1 to the 50.54(f) letter requested that licensees reevaluate seismic hazards at their sites using present-day methodologies and guidance. Enclosure 1, Item 6, of the 50.54(f) letter requested that licensees identify “interim evaluation and actions taken or planned to address the higher seismic hazard relative to the design basis as appropriate, prior to completion of the [seismic] risk evaluation.” In addition to the interim evaluation provided in the March 2014 Seismic Screening and Hazard report, the licensees for the Central and Eastern United States committed to providing the Expedited Seismic Evaluation Process (ESEP) report, an interim evaluation, by December 31, 2014.

By letter dated April 29, 2015<sup>1</sup>, Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD, the licensee), provided its ESEP report in response to Enclosure 1, Item (6) of the 50.54(f) letter, for Cooper Nuclear Station (Cooper). The NRC staff assessed the licensee’s implementation of the ESEP guidance through the completion of a reviewer checklist<sup>2</sup>. In support of NRC staff questions, NPPD provided a response dated July 1, 2015<sup>3</sup>, clarifying submittal information. Based on the NRC staff review of the ESEP report and responses to the staff’s questions, the NRC staff concludes that the licensee’s implementation of the interim evaluation meets the intent of the guidance.

The NRC staff concludes that, through the implementation of the ESEP guidance, the licensee identified and evaluated the seismic capacity of certain key installed mitigating strategies

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<sup>1</sup> The April 29, 2015, letter can be found under ADAMS Accession Nos. ML15126A175 and ML15126A176, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The Cooper ESEP NRC review checklist can be found under ADAMS Accession No. ML15231A399.

<sup>3</sup> The NPPD response to NRC staff questions can be found ADAMS Accession No. ML15215A127.

O. Limpias

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equipment that is used for core cooling and containment functions to cope with scenarios that involve a loss of all alternating current power and loss of access to the ultimate heat sink to withstand a seismic event 1.39 times the safe shutdown earthquake for Cooper. The licensee's ESEP assessment provides additional assurance which supports continued plant safety while the longer-term seismic evaluation is completed to support regulatory decision making. The NRC staff concludes that the licensee responded appropriately to Enclosure 1, Item (6) of the 50.54(f) letter. Application of this review is limited to the interim evaluation as part of the Recommendation 2.1 Seismic review.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-1115 or via e-mail at Nicholas.DiFrancesco@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick DiFrancesco', with a large loop at the end.

Nicholas J. DiFrancesco, Senior Project Manager  
Hazards Management Branch  
Japan Lessons-Learned Division  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-298

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If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-1115 or via e-mail at Nicholas.DiFrancesco@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Nicholas J. DiFrancesco, Senior Project Manager  
 Hazards Management Branch  
 Japan Lessons-Learned Division  
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