current locations. Thus, the current license condition already allows the licensee to permanently abandon the current monitoring sites (as long as alternate sites are selected).

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit 1.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

On April 14, 1995, the staff consulted with Mr. John Sims, Deputy of External Research, U.S. Geological Survey regarding the type of equipment used for seismic monitoring networks. Mr. Sims commented that the equipment was generally compact; therefore, he judged that there were no significant environmental impacts associated with the removal of the equipment and abandonment of the sites.

On April 24, 1995, the staff consulted with Dr. Pradeep Talwani, of the University of South Carolina (USC) regarding the planned disposition of the network monitoring sites if the licensee stops funding the program. Dr. Talwani maintains the seismic monitoring system for the licensee. Dr. Talwani stated that if the licensee stops funding the network, all but one of the monitoring sites will be abandoned (i.e., the equipment will be removed). Dr. Talwani also stated that the monitors were solar powered with battery backups. Therefore, he judged that there were no significant environmental impacts associated with the removal of the equipment and abandonment of the

In accordance with its stated policy, on April 24, 1995, the staff consulted with the South Carolina State official, Mr. Virgil Autry of the Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste Management, Department of Health and Environmental Control, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letters dated March 6, 1995, and May 5, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public

Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Fairfield County Library, 300 Washington Street, Winnsboro, SC.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 5th day of June 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Frederick J. Hebdon,

Director, Project Directorate II-3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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[Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425]

Georgia Power Company, Et Al.; (Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2)

Exemption

Ι

Georgia Power Company, et al. (the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License Nos. NPR-68 and NPF-81, which authorize operation of the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP), Units 1 and 2, respectively. The licenses provide, among other things, that the licensee is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the Commission now or hereafter in effect.

The facilities consist of two pressurized water reactors, VEGP Units 1 and 2, at the licensee's site located near Waynesboro, Georgia.

II

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR), § 50.60, 'Acceptance Criteria for Fracture Prevention Measures for Light-Water Nuclear Power Reactors for Normal Operation," states that all light-water nuclear power reactors must meet the fracture toughness and material surveillance program requirements for the reactor coolant pressure boundary as set forth in Appendices G and H to 10 CFR part 50. Appendix G to 10 CFR part 50 defines pressure/temperature (P/T) limits during any condition of normal operation, including anticipated operational occurrences and system hydrostatic tests to which the pressure boundary may be subjected over its service lifetime. Section 50.60 (b) specifies that alternatives to the described requirements in Appendices G and H to 10 CFR part 50 may be used when an exemption is granted by the Commission under 10 CFR 50.12.

To prevent low temperature overpressure transients that would produce pressure excursions exceeding the Appendix G P/T limits while the reactor is operating at low temperatures, the licensee installed a low temperature overpressure (LTOP) system. The system includes pressure-relieving devices called Power-Operated Relief Valves (PORVs). The PORVs are set at a pressure low enough so that if an LTOP transient occurred, the mitigation system would prevent the pressure in the reactor vessel from exceeding the Appendix G P/T limits. To prevent the PORVs from lifting as a result of normal operating pressure surges (e.g., reactor coolant pump starting, and shifting operating charging pumps) with the reactor coolant system in a water solid condition, the operating pressure must be maintained below the PORV setpoint. In addition, in order to prevent cavitation of a reactor coolant pump, the operator must maintain a differential pressure across the reactor coolant pump seals. Hence, the licensee must operate the plant in a pressure window that is defined as the difference between the minimum required pressure to start a reactor coolant pump and the operating margin to prevent lifting of the PORVs due to normal operating pressure surges. The licensee's proposed LTOP analysis includes changes to account for the non-conservatism identified in Westinghouse Nuclear Safety Advisory Letter 93005A and NRC Information Notice 93-58. The new analysis accounts for the static head due to evaluation differences and the dynamic head effect of four reactor coolant pump (RCP) operation. By including these factors and using the Appendix G safety margins, the licensee determined that the operating margin to the PORV setpoint would be depleted at approximately 120 °F for Unit 1 and 145 °F for Unit 2. Therefore, operating with these limits could result in the lifting of the PORVs and cavitation of the reactor coolant pumps during normal operation.

The licensee proposed that in determining the design setpoint for LTOP events for Vogtle Units 1 and 2, the allowable pressure be determined using the safety margins developed in an alternate methodology in lieu of the safety margins currently required by Appendix G, 10 CFR part 50. Designated Code Case N-514, the proposed alternate methodology is consistent with guidelines developed by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Working Group on Operating Plant Criteria to define pressure limits during LTOP events that avoid certain unnecessary operational restrictions, provide adequate margins against failure of the reactor pressure vessel, and reduce the potential for unnecessary activation of pressure-relieving devices