

March 26, 2001

Mr. G. R. Peterson
Site Vice President
Catawba Nuclear Station
Duke Energy Corporation
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745-9635

SUBJECT: CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2 RE: PROPOSED MEETING TO
DISCUSS PROMATEC HEMYC 1-HOUR AND MT 3-HOUR FIRE BARRIER
SYSTEMS (TAC NO. MB1311)

Dear Mr. Peterson:

During a November 1999 fire protection inspection at Carolina Power & Light Company's Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, NRC Region II inspectors identified a potential issue associated with Promatec Hemyc 1-hour and MT 3-hour fire barrier systems not being qualified to meet Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 50, Appendix R, safe shutdown separation requirements. In a November 23, 1999, Task Interface Agreement (TIA 99-028; ADAMS Accession No. ML003671052), Region II requested the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation's (NRR's) assistance to resolve this issue. In its August 1, 2000, response to TIA 99-028 (ADAMS Accession No. ML003736721), the NRR staff concluded that the fire rating of the installed fire wrap at HNP was indeterminate.

The Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) confirmed that the plants listed below use Hemyc or MT fire wrap to comply with 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, safe shutdown separation requirements.

Arkansas Nuclear One Units 1 and 2	Beaver Valley Unit 1
Catawba Units 1 and 2	FitzPatrick
Genoa	Harris
Indian Point Units 2 and 3	McGuire Units 1 and 2
Robinson 2	Vermont Yankee
Waterford	

The NRR staff requested that NEI coordinate a generic industry initiative to address the Hemyc and MT fire barrier issue, but NEI declined. Therefore, the staff will be working with the affected licensees to resolve this issue. The staff's planned course of action includes meeting with the affected licensees as a group to discuss (1) the technical issues, (2) the applicability of the issues to the affected plants, and (3) the ultimate resolution of the issue. We are requesting that the affected licensees take the issue on as a voluntary initiative and propose an approach for resolving the issue.

In the near future, the NRC Lead Project Manager for this issue, Richard Laufer, or I will contact you and the other affected licensees to arrange a joint meeting to discuss the Hemyc and MT fire barrier issue. Allowing time for licensees to review and consider the results from the HNP review (TIA 99-028), we estimate that the meeting will take place in the May - June 2001 timeframe.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Chandu P. Patel, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414

cc: See next page

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Chandu P. Patel, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
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