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U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Subject: Oconee Nuclear Station, Units 1, 2 and 3
Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270, 50-287
Use of ASME Section IX Code Cases 2142-1 and 2143-1

The purpose of this letter is to request approval in accordance with 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3), to use the alternative rules of ASME Section IX Code Cases 2142-1 and 2143-1 in lieu of the currently required welding materials. The use of weld filler materials most like Alloy 690 in composition is necessary in the fabrication of the replacement reactor vessel closure heads for Oconee Units 1, 2, and 3. These materials have been approved by ASME through Code Cases 2142-1 and 2143-1 and are designated as UNS N06052 and UNS W86152, respectively. The NRC has previously approved use of these code cases for similar applications, including (TAC Nos. MA6209, MA6210, and MA6211) for fabrication of the Oconee Units 1, 2, and 3 replacement steam generators, and for repair of the current reactor vessel closure heads (TAC Nos. MB0854, MB1319, and MB1835).

ASME approved Code Cases 2142-1 and 2143-1 on June 5, 1995, and reaffirmed their use again on July 22, 1998. These welding materials are classified as F-No. 43 for both weld procedure and performance qualification purposes. UNS W86152 is the matching Shielded Metal Arc Welding (SMAW) electrode for Alloy 690 and UNS N06052 is the companion bare filler metal. These weld materials have been shown in EPRI studies to have superior corrosion resistance weldments and are the preferred choice for welding applications. They provide an acceptable level of quality and safety because of their superior corrosion resistant properties.

The fabrication schedule for the Oconee replacement reactor vessel closure heads requires the use of these weld materials beginning in February 2002. Duke Energy Corporation requests approval for the use of Code Cases 2142-1 and 2143-1 by February 1, 2002.

If there are any questions, please contact Robert Sharpe at (704) 382-0956.

Very truly yours,

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