



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION II
SAM NUNN ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET SW SUITE 23T85
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931**

March 4, 2002

South Carolina Electric & Gas Company
ATTN: Mr. Stephen A. Byrne
Senior Vice President
Nuclear Operations
Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station
P. O. Box 88
Jenkinsville, SC 29065

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT LETTER - VIRGIL C. SUMMER NUCLEAR PLANT
(REPORT 50-395/02-01)**

Dear Mr. Byrne:

On February 5, 2002, the NRC staff completed its end-of-cycle plant performance assessment of the Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Plant. The end-of-cycle review for V. C. Summer involved the participation of all technical divisions in evaluating performance indicators (PIs) and inspection results for the period from April 1 through December 31, 2001. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility. This will provide you with the opportunity to prepare for these inspections and to inform us of any planned inspections which may conflict with your plant activities.

As discussed in our previous annual assessment letter dated May 31, 2001, this inspection and assessment cycle consisted of three quarters (i.e., the second, third, and fourth calendar quarters of Calendar Year 2001) instead of the usual four quarters. This change was implemented in order to align the inspection and assessment cycle with the calendar year beginning on January 1, 2002.

Overall, V. C. Summer operated in a manner that preserved public health and safety and fully met all cornerstone objectives. Plant performance for the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC's Action Matrix, based on all inspection findings being classified as having very low safety significance (Green) and all PIs indicating performance at a level requiring no additional NRC oversight (Green). Therefore, we plan to conduct only baseline inspections at your facility through March 31, 2003.

While plant performance for the most recent quarter is within the Licensee Response Column of the Action Matrix, during the first two quarters of the assessment cycle plant performance was in the Regulatory Response Column due to a White Safety System Unavailability -

Residual Heat Removal System PI in the Mitigating Systems Cornerstone. An inoperable turbine-driven emergency feedwater pump during the previous assessment cycle was the major contributor to the White PI this assessment cycle. During this assessment cycle in May 2001, the NRC conducted a supplemental inspection and concluded that you had taken or planned appropriate actions.

On August 31, 2001, the staff issued a Severity Level III Notice of Violation in accordance with the Enforcement Policy. The violation, which occurred in March 1997, involved the failure to perform an adequate written safety evaluation for a change to the facility which involved an unreviewed safety question. Specifically a door was disabled which separated safety-related emergency electrical busses located in a mild environment from a harsh environment. You took corrective actions to correct and prevent the violation in late 1998 and 1999. No further NRC followup was warranted.

The enclosed inspection plan details the inspections scheduled through March 31, 2003. The inspection plan is provided to minimize the resource impact on your staff and to allow for scheduling conflicts and personnel availability to be resolved in advance of inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature. The last six months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the mid-cycle review meeting.

With respect to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, immediately following the attacks, the NRC issued safeguards advisories recommending that nuclear power plant licensees go to the highest level of security, and all promptly did so. With continued uncertainty about the possibility of additional terrorist activities, the Nation's nuclear power plants, including V. C. Summer, remain at a high level of security. On February 25, 2002, the NRC issued an Order to all nuclear power plant licensees, requiring them to take certain additional interim compensatory measures to address the generalized high-level threat environment. These additional compensatory requirements will provide the NRC with reasonable assurance that public health and safety and the common defense and security continue to be adequately protected in the current generalized high-level threat environment. These requirements will remain in effect pending notification from the Commission that a significant change in the threat environment occurs, or until the Commission determines that other changes are needed following a more comprehensive re-evaluation of current safeguards and security programs. To date, we have monitored the South Carolina Electric & Gas Company's actions in response to the terrorist attacks through a series of audits. With the issuance of the Order, in addition to the inspections described in the enclosed plan, we will evaluate V. C. Summer's compliance with these interim requirements.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

If circumstances arise which cause us to change this inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact Kerry Landis at 404-562-4510 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Loren R. Plisco, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-395
License No. NPF-12

Enclosure: Summer Inspection / Activity Plan

cc w/encl.:

R. J. White
Nuclear Coordinator (Mail Code 802)
S.C. Public Service Authority
Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station
Electronic Mail Distribution

Kathryn M. Sutton, Esq.
Winston and Strawn
Electronic Mail Distribution

Henry J. Porter, Assistant Director
Division of Waste Mgmt.
Dept. of Health and Environmental
Control
Electronic Mail Distribution

R. Mike Gandy
Division of Radioactive Waste Mgmt.
S. C. Department of Health and
Environmental Control
Electronic Mail Distribution

Greg H. Halnon, General Manager
Nuclear Plant Operations (Mail Code 303)
South Carolina Electric & Gas Company
Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station
Electronic Mail Distribution

Melvin N. Browne, Manager
Nuclear Licensing & Operating
Experience (Mail Code 830)
Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station
Electronic Mail Distribution

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