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U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant
Measurement Uncertainty Recapture Power Uprate (MURPU)
Post MURPU Steam Dryer Performance Monitoring and Inspections

Ladies and Gentlemen:

By letter dated December 19, 2002, Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) submitted to the NRC a license amendment request for the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant Units 1 and 2. The proposed amendment increases the authorized maximum power level for both units from the current limit of 2763 MWt to 2804 MWt. Although the requested power level is a 1.5% increase above the current maximum power level, it will represent a 15% increase above the original maximum power level.

Recently, the NRC identified issues in Information Notice 2002-26, Supplement 1 "Additional Failure of Steam Dryer After Recent Power Uprate," related to the potential generic implication of extended power uprates with respect to steam dryer failures. Hatch has been operating at extended power uprate (EPU) since 1999 for Unit 1 and 1998 for Unit 2. The EPU power level represents approximately 113.4% of the original power level.


SNC has been informed that General Electric will issue a revision to SIL-644 to address these potential generic issues. At the time of this letter, the revision to SIL-644 has not been issued. Consequently, the total content of the SIL cannot be reconciled as part of this letter. However, Attachment 1 describes the actions that SNC is committing to perform as a result of the issues identified in IN 2002-26, Supplement 1. Although the revision to SIL-644 has not been issued, SNC expects that the actions described in Attachment 1 will be consistent with the revised SIL's recommendations.

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The NRC commitments contained in this letter are provided in Attachment 1. If you have any questions, please advise.

Sincerely,



H. L. Sumner, Jr.

HLS/WHC/sdl

Enclosure: Attachment 1 – Post MURPU Steam Dryer Performance Monitoring and Inspections

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Mr. J. D. Woodard, Executive Vice President
Mr. G. R. Frederick, General Manager – Plant Hatch
Document Services RTYPE: CHA02.004

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mr. L. A. Reyes, Regional Administrator
Mr. S. D. Bloom, NRR Project Manager – Hatch
Mr. D. S. Simpkins, Senior Resident Inspector – Hatch

Attachment 1
Post MURPU Steam Dryer Performance Monitoring and Inspections

Inspection

Historically, visual examinations of the steam dryer have been part of the vessel internal inspection scope for various outages for Hatch. However, limited inspections have occurred since operating at the EPU power level; therefore, trends are not well established for existing flaw indications. As a result of SIL-644, concentrated inspections of the Unit 2 steam dryer were performed during the most recent (Spring 2003) refueling outage. No evidence of a SIL-644 failure mechanism of the dryer components was noted during this inspection. As indicated above, Unit 2 has been operating at the EPU power level slightly longer than Unit 1.

SNC commits to the following with respect to future steam dryer inspections:

- Perform VT-1 inspections of the accessible external welds and VT-3 inspections on the outside accessible surfaces during the next refueling outage for each unit.
- Implement the applicable recommendations from the impending revision to SIL-644 with respect to steam dryer component inspections.

Moisture Carryover Monitoring

Hatch currently does not have a moisture carryover monitoring program; therefore, established trends do not exist on the performance of the steam dryer. As a result of IN 2002-26, Supplement 1, SNC commits to the following with respect to moisture carryover monitoring:

- Establish the unit specific baseline for moisture carryover.
- Develop and implement a moisture carryover monitoring program.
- Perform moisture carryover sampling on a periodic basis of at least once per month.
- Perform moisture carryover sampling during power uprate ascension testing in conjunction with other recommended testing for thermal power optimization (TPO) operation (95%, 100% and 101.5% current power levels).