February 28, 2006

Mr. Bruce H. Hamilton
Vice President, Oconee Site
Duke Energy Corporation
7800 Rochester Highway
Seneca, SC 29672

SUBJECT: OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1, 2, AND 3 (OCONEE) - TORNADO AND HIGH ENERGY LINE BREAK LICENSING BASIS ISSUES (TAC NOS. MC4608, MC4609, MC4610, AND MC5457)

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

This is in response to your letter dated January 31, 2006, concerning project plans for tornado and high energy line break (HELB) events outside containment. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is encouraged by the formation of your tornado/HELB task force and the resultant information presented in your letter, as well as in the follow-up meeting of February 7, 2006. Such an effort is a positive step toward resolving the long-standing tornado and HELB licensing-basis issues at Oconee.

As we discussed during the February 7th meeting, to sustain substantive progress it is imperative that clear, frequent, and open communications transpire between your staff and the NRC staff. I believe that routine public meetings between NRC and Duke Energy management to discuss progress and identify issues requiring clarification are an important element of communication strategy.

In addition to routine management meetings, we have established two primary points of contact; Leonard Olshan for the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR)-related actions and Robert Carroll for the Region II (RII)-related actions. Futhermore, technical leads have already been designated to support the review of your planned license submittals addressing: (1) incorporation of NUREG/CR-2913, "Two-Phase Jet Loads," and Branch Technical Position MEB 3-1 into the Oconee HELB licensing basis; (2) application of TORMIS and/or Draft Regulatory Guide DG-1143, “Design-Basis Tornado and Tornado Missiles for Nuclear Power Plants,” in reestablishing the Oconee tornado licensing basis; and (3) use of Fiber Reinforced Polymer (FRP) technology to strengthen selected masonry walls against the effects of tornado wind and differential pressure loads. As this will be the NRC’s first time to review such application of the FRP technology, we will make every effort to support your request for a pre-submittal meeting in March 2006.

It is our understanding that you will be providing the NRC with a document listing the structures, systems, and components (SSCs) needed to mitigate tornado- and HELB-related events, as well as specifying which SSCs will be afforded physical protection from these events and which SSCs will rely on analyses to demonstrate adequate safety margin. During the February 7th meeting, you acknowledged the NRC’s view that inherent to accrediting an SSC as part of the mitigation strategy for tornado- and/or HELB-related events, appropriate protection must also

be afforded to the SSC's supporting equipment; this includes associated instrumentation, power supplies, and controls. Other key considerations that will have to be made regarding Oconee's mitigation of HELB-related events is the necessity to account for jet impingement (throughout the auxiliary and turbine buildings) and the achievement of cold shutdown. Accordingly, to ensure the overall action plan/goal is understood by everyone involved, it is requested that you also provide the NRC with the intended mitigation strategies for tornado- and HELB-related events. Included in such a submittal should be key risk and/or event assumptions, the intent/concept behind the planned analyses (e.g., jet impingement, cold shutdown, TORMIS, etc.), and the major milestones toward timely resolution.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (301) 415-3037.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Edwin M. Hackett, Deputy Director
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270, and 50-287

cc: See next page

cc:

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