

SOUTHEASTERN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL

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January 10, 1980

Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Denton:

PROPOSED SHUTDOWNS OF NUCLEAR UNITS

At the direction of Mr. W. L. Proffitt, Chairman of the Southeastern Electric Reliability Council, a voluntary organization of 27 electric utilities in the Southeast, the purpose of which is to improve the reliability of bulk power supply of its Member Systems, we have reviewed the capacity, load, and reserves situation in the Subregions of SERC, other than the VACAR Subregion, in order to assess what help might be expected from those Subregions during the months of February, March, and April of 1980.

SERC is seriously concerned with the existing reserve levels in the VACAR and Florida Subregions. Reserves on the VACAR Subregion are particularly low in the months of February and March, and simultaneous shutdown of two Oconee units during this period would make the situation critical. During April and May, reserves are barely adequate because practically all of our power systems have extensive maintenance programs during the spring months, and it is not feasible to postpone these outages because of the heavy loads expected in the summer months. The results of our review are as follows:

The TVA Subregion will not be able to commit any capacity toward mitigating the effect of nuclear unit outages for the months of February through April. However, in case of a sudden emergency, TVA would, of course, supply all emergency capacity which it might have at the time. The primary reason for TVA's shortage of capacity is the withholding of the operating license for the Sequoyah No. 1 nuclear unit rated 1148 MW. The overall SERC problem is also aggravated by the withholding of the operating license for the North Anna No. 1 nuclear unit rated 944 MW.

The Southern Subregion may have as much as 500 to 800 MW which might be applied on a non-assured basis to help the VACAR or Florida situations. It is

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likely that there will be a number of occasions when some or all of this capacity would need to be supplied from combustion turbines using No. 2 oil. Coal-fired generation diverted to help replace nuclear generation will subtract from anticipated sales to the Southwest Power Pool for the replacement of oil-fired energy in the spring.

We find that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Economic Regulatory Administration have had several exchanges of correspondence with the Florida utilities and with the Florida Electric Power Coordinating Group. These communications have asked for a large amount of comprehensive data intended to enable you to reach decisions on the Florida units. This information will be available shortly. However, we feel we should not wait for clarification of the Florida situation because the basic problem is tieline limitations between the southern and northern portions of Florida. A new 230 KV line was placed in service a few days ago, but studies and experience to date have concluded that it is not prudent to load the Florida-Southern ties on a regular basis to exceed about 300 MW in either direction. Thus, at best there may be occasions during the three months' period when Florida could supply as much as 300 MW unless the nuclear problems within Florida prevent it.

To summarize, it appears that the other Subregions of SERC might be able to supply VACAR on a non-assured basis the power equivalent of one nuclear unit for the months of February, March, and April. However, the availability of such capacity is not assured, and substantially all of it would be at the expense of oil-fired generation if oil is available. When tielines are loaded on a continuing daily basis for any purpose, they lose their capacity to provide power in emergencies which is the primary function of these tie lines. SERC urges that the outages to be required of nuclear units in its area be sequential rather than simultaneous or stretched out as long as feasible so as to minimize damage to the reliability of the Region. If you have any questions, we will try to provide answers.

Yours very truly,

Wm R Brownlee

Wm. R. Brownlee

WRB/llh

cc: Mr. Richard E. Weiner
U.S. Department of Energy

bc: Mr. W. L. Proffitt
SERC Executive Committee
SERC-TAC Executive Committee
Mr. M. R. Gent
Mr. Austin C. Thies
Mr. Walter D. Brown