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JULY 1, 1983

Mr. James P. O'Reilly, Regional Administrator
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region II
101 Marietta Street, NW, Suite 2900
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Re: Oconee Nuclear Station
Docket Nos. 50-269, -270, -287

Dear Mr. O'Reilly:

Please find attached a special report on non-functional fire barriers. This report is submitted pursuant to Oconee Nuclear Station Technical Specification 3.17.6.3 which concerns fire barrier penetrations that cannot be restored to functional status within seven days, and describes an incident which is considered to be of no significance with respect to its effect on the health and safety of the public.

Very truly yours,

H.B. Tucker / HBT

Hal B. Tucker

JCP/php

Attachment

cc: Document Control Desk
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

INPO Records Center
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Mr. J. C. Bryant
NRC Resident Inspector
Oconee Nuclear Station

Mr. John F. Suermann
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

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Duke Power Company
Oconee Nuclear Station
Special Report on Non-Functional
Fire Barriers

On May 25, 1983, during an inspection to verify the integrity of fire barrier penetration seals, five penetrations in the Unit 1 Equipment Room were found to be non-functional. They consisted of penetrations for an air condition vent duct, a ventilation supply duct, a vent duct, and two ventilation return ducts. Each duct either did not have a washer on the all-thread rod at the surface of the wall, or did not have sufficient flashing to cover the hole in the wall. Pursuant to Technical Specification 3.17.6.3, these penetrations were to be made functional within seven days or a report was required to be submitted to the NRC. A fire watch patrol was immediately established to inspect the area at least once per hour. This was done after the operability of the fire detection instrumentation was verified.

The reason for not repairing the penetrations within seven days was personnel error. The proper attention was not given to expediting the repair of the fire barriers. Personnel were aware of the seven day limit after a recent occurrence of a similar incident, but failed to identify and communicate the need to complete the repairs before the time limit expired. Design deficiency contributed to the cause, due to the lack of guidance in the actual implementation of the upgrade of the fire barrier penetrations. The inefficiencies in these penetrations were not discovered in two earlier inspections due to lack of training and experience of the personnel who conducted the inspections, and inadequate procedures that were used to conduct them.

No equipment or systems were affected by this incident. The chance of a fire in the Equipment Room is remote. The use of high heat, such as welding or burning on a job in this area, is restricted and requires a burning permit and fire watch. There are smoke detectors located in the Equipment Room that are functional along with a manually activated spray system. In addition, the Equipment Room is toured each shift. An hourly fire watch tour was established when the penetrations were identified as non-functional. Based on the above, the possibility of a fire spreading was very low. The health and safety of the public were not affected by this incident.

All subject penetrations were repaired and declared functional on June 9, 1983. It was reemphasized to the personnel involved of the necessity of ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to correct deficiencies as soon as possible. Affected procedures will be revised to include references to the seven day limit and to clarify the inspection requirements for the ventilation ducts. A training package will be developed for certain maintenance personnel that addresses awareness of Technical Specifications applicable to their respective area/equipment. It is planned that an individual will be assigned the responsibility to coordinate between Design Engineering and the station who would be responsible for fire protection. Design Engineering has implemented a program whereby specific installation instructions are included in Nuclear Station Modification (NSM) packages affecting fire barriers.