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April 29, 1996

C. R. Hutchinson
Vice President
Operations
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Station P1-37
Washington, D.C. 20555

Attention: Document Control Desk

Subject: Grand Gulf Nuclear Station
Docket No. 50-416
License No. NPF-29
SALP Report Response

GNRO: 96/00050

Gentlemen:

At Grand Gulf we've held a longstanding belief that the SALP process serves a valuable purpose in re-focusing our attention on those activities important to maintaining strong safety performance. The recent SALP report and SALP exit conducted by Region IV confirmed our belief.

We found the SALP Board's analysis of our performance to be fair, insightful, perceptive and objective. In many areas it validated our conclusions and confirmed that we are on the right track towards continuous improvement of our programs and processes. In other areas it provided fresh viewpoints that will lead to enhanced performance.

We particularly appreciate the high quality discussion during the SALP exit meeting on April 18. As the amount of information in the written SALP report declines it becomes more difficult to understand the conclusions and messages of the SALP Board. The frank review of SALP Board deliberations that was presented in the exit meeting was essential to our understanding. To borrow the SALP metaphor, the SALP exit merited a rating of superior performance.

The unusual problems we experienced last SALP period with automatic scrams appear to be largely behind us. The difficulty we had in determining common threads amongst the scrams led us to conclude that they resulted primarily from a lessened intensity and focus on trip-critical activities across most functional areas. Based on the feedback during the SALP exit, we believe you concur. As you noted, we have restored focus and taken a number of steps to prevent recurrence, resulting in an extended period of scram-free operation.

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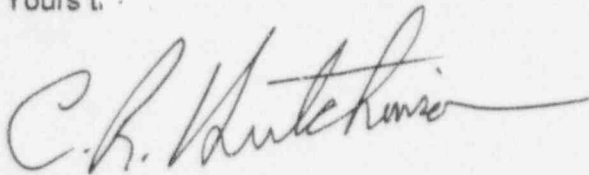
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For the new SALP period, our specific challenges are clear:

- Earlier identification and resolution of plant material conditions that may have implications for plant safety or availability,
- Enhanced oversight of craft activities that could lead to undesirable safety or availability consequences, and
- Additional attention to configuration management.

We're confident that concentration in these areas coupled with a general emphasis on continuous performance improvement, a mature safety culture and critical self-assessment will result in an even stronger SALP assessment in 18 months.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. R. Hutchinson".

CRH/MJM:be

cc: (see next page)

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