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J. D. Woodard
Senior Vice President

the southern electric system

January 21, 1997

Docket Nos. 50-321
50-366

HL-5298

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

Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant
Testing of
CRD/Scram Solenoid Pilot Valves with Viton Internals

Gentlemen:

By letter dated March 21, 1996, Georgia Power Company (GPC) informed the NRC of the intent to implement testing of the Alternate Rod Insertion (ARI) system and augmented control rod scram time testing of scram solenoid pilot valves (SSPVs) with Viton internals at the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant. GPC committed to continue testing the SSPVs with Viton internals on a 60-day surveillance cycle until sufficient information documenting the performance of the subject valves is available. Since March 1996, GPC has been performing control rod scram time testing of the subject control rods.

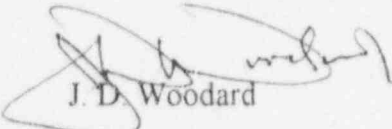
Plant Hatch is a member of the Boiling Water Reactors Owners Group (BWROG) committee investigating the SSPV problem. The committee collected scram time data from member utilities, including Plant Hatch, and based upon that data, determined the scram time delays associated with the Viton diaphragms are not a safety issue. The 5% scram insertion time for SSPVs with Viton Seals has stabilized at Plant Hatch from approximately .265 to .293 seconds. This is conservative with or consistent with insertion times observed at other plants and is well within the .440 second time allowed by the Technical Specifications.

Based upon the findings of the BWROG and the Plant Hatch test data discussed above, GPC concluded that continued use of the Viton diaphragm is acceptable and no further augmented control rod scram time testing of SSPVs with Viton internals is necessary. GPC will continue to test the ARI system once per refueling outage.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

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PDR ADOCK 05000321
P PDR


J. D. Woodard

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OCV/eb

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cc: Georgia Power Company
Mr. H. L. Sumner, Nuclear Plant General Manager
NORMS

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C.
Mr. K. Jabbour, Licensing Project Manager - Hatch

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region II
Mr. L. A. Reyes, Regional Administrator
Mr. B. L. Holbrook, Senior Resident Inspector - Hatch