



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 23, 1997

Mr. H. L. Sumner, Jr.
Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

SUBJECT: INSPECTION OF THE CORE SPRAY INTERNAL PIPING SYSTEM -
EDWIN I. HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2
(TACS M98406 AND M98407)

Dear Mr. Sumner:

By letter dated January 21, 1997, you submitted your plans for performing core spray internal piping system inspections beginning with the spring of 1997 refueling outage for Hatch Nuclear Plant, Unit 2. You informed the staff of your intention to modify your present commitments associated with IE Bulletin (IEB) 80-13, "Cracking in Core Spray Spargers," dated May 12, 1980. Specifically, you stated that you planned to modify the scope and examination techniques that you had previously used to perform inspections of the core spray internal piping and spargers. This modification would follow the industry guidance contained in the BWR Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP) document, "Core Spray Internals Inspection and Flaw Evaluation Guidelines (BWRVIP-18)," dated July 26, 1996.

Because the inspection methods that you proposed focus on areas of the core spray piping and spargers which are more likely to experience intergranular-stress corrosion cracking and generally uses inspection methods that are equivalent to or more stringent than the method recommended in IEB 80-13, the staff finds that the scope and inspection methods used for the inspection of the core spray internal piping and spargers at Hatch Unit 2 are acceptable for this outage.

It should be noted that the NRC staff is currently reviewing the acceptability of using BWRVIP-18, generically, for all BWRs. While the staff has not identified any major deficiencies in the BWRVIP's technical assessment at this time, neither has the staff made a determination as to its generic acceptability. Therefore, you should be aware that if concerns are identified during the staff's generic review of BWRVIP-18, and you intend to follow the BWRVIP-18 guidance in the future, the NRC staff may request that you also address these concerns on a plant-specific basis.

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H. L. Sumner, Jr.

- 2 -

April 23, 1997

This completes our action on the above TACs. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (301) 415-1496.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Kahtan N. Jabbour, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

cc: See next page

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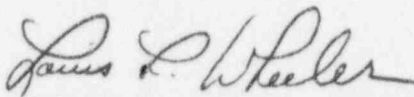
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Sincerely,


for

Kahtan N. Jabbour, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

cc: See next page

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