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April 28, 1997

Docket Nos. 50-424
50-425

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D. C. 20555-0001

VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT
RESPONSE TO GENERIC LETTER 97-01
DEGRADATION OF CONTROL ROD DRIVE MECHANISM
NOZZLE AND OTHER VESSEL CLOSURE HEAD PENETRATIONS

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The NRC issued Generic Letter (GL) 97-01, Degradation of Control Rod Drive Mechanism Nozzle and other Vessel Closure Head Penetrations, dated April 1, 1997. In the generic letter, the NRC requested licensees to provide information necessary to verify compliance with 10 CFR 50.55a and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix A, GDC 14, and to determine whether an augmented inspection program, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii), is required for vessel head penetrations (VHPs). Specifically, the NRC requested licensees to provide a written report that includes the information listed in GL97-01 for its facility within 120 days of the date of the GL. Additionally, GL97-01, required that licensees provide a response within 30 days stating: (1) whether or not the requested information will be submitted and (2) whether or not the requested information will be submitted within the requested time period. This letter provides the Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) 30-day response required by GL97-01.

SNC is currently pursuing a solution to the VHP issue in conjunction with the Westinghouse Owners Group (WOG). Several key meetings are scheduled prior to the due date for the 120-day response, during which, it is expected that a program to address VHP cracking will be developed. Due to the time and effort necessary to develop such a program, the information necessary to provide a complete response to GL97-01, Item 1, may not be available within the allotted 120 days. SNC will provide a 120-day response that addresses Item 1.1 regarding the inspection activities performed to date and provide a plan for addressing the VHP issue.

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SNC will provide a response within 120 days to GL97-01, Item 2. Any plans to perform inspections will be included in the response to GL97-01, Item 1.

Should you have any questions, please advise.

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY

C.K. McCoy
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SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME
THIS 28th DAY OF April, 1997

Mary M. Bentley
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: May 9, 1999

CKM/TWS

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
J. B. Beasley, General Manager - Vogtle Electric Generating Plant
M. Sheibani, Nuclear Safety and Compliance

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC
L. L. Wheeler, Licensing Project Manager, Vogtle
L. A. Reyes, Regional Administrator
C. R. Ogle, Senior Resident Inspector - Vogtle