Lewis Sumner
Vice President
Hatch Project Support

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
40 Inverness Parkway
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201

Tel 205.992.7279
Fax 205.992.0341

SOUTHERN COMPANY
Energy to Serve Your World℠

January 6, 2000

Docket Nos. 50-321
50-366

HL-5878

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

Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant
Notice of Intent
Transition to Use of Biometric Screening for Protection Area Personnel Access Control

Ladies and Gentlemen:

By transmittal of this letter, Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) hereby informs the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission of an intent to transition the E. I. Hatch Nuclear Plant Protected Area personnel access control methodology to the use of biometric screening. Currently, Plant Hatch utilizes the combination of badge issuance, an individually assigned card-key, and an individually assigned PIN number to control personnel access to the site Protected Area. Upon completion of the transitional program described below, Plant Hatch will use the combination of an individually assigned card-key and a successful "read" from a hand geometry scanner to control access to the site Protected Area. The transition from the use of badge issuance and individually assigned PIN numbers to the use of hand geometry scanning will be performed as follows:

1. The hardware required for the use of hand geometry scanning will be installed in the Plant Hatch Plant Entry and Security Building (PESB) which is the current point of personnel access into the Protected Area. (This action has been completed.)

2. The "enrollment" process for plant personnel with unescorted access privileges will be initiated (i.e., an initial hand geometry template will be placed into the Hatch security computer system for each person with unescorted access privileges). The Hatch Security Force will continue to issue badges as a means of positive identification. Plant personnel will continue to use their individually assigned PIN numbers to gain access to the Protected Area. Plant personnel will continue to return their badges to a member of the Security force upon exit from the Protected Area.

3. Upon successful enrollment of an adequate number of plant personnel with unescorted access privileges, as determined by the Manager-Security, one or more of the existing turnstiles that control entry to the Protected Area will be converted to the use of hand geometry scanning. At least one of the remaining turnstiles will continue to require the input of an individually assigned PIN number to gain entry into the Protected Area.

S003
1/0

4. Upon conversion of one or more of the existing turnstiles to hand geometry control, personnel with unescorted access privileges who have an active hand geometry template on the Hatch security computer system will be able to gain entry into the Protected Area through either a successful hand scan or the input of an individually assigned PIN number, as required by the turnstile in question. Personnel without an active hand geometry template will be required to gain entry through a turnstile requiring the input of an individually assigned PIN number. The Hatch Security Force will continue to issue badges as a means of positive identification. Plant personnel will continue to return their badges to a member of the Security Force upon exit from the Protected Area.

5. After an appropriate period of transition to allow all personnel with unescorted access privileges to complete the hand geometry "enrollment" process, as determined by the Manager-Security, all remaining turnstiles will be converted to the use of hand geometry scanning. Upon completion of this conversion, all plant personnel with unescorted access privileges will be required to complete a successful hand scan prior to entry into the Protected Area. The use of PIN numbers will no longer be authorized and the associated hardware located at each turnstile will be de-activated. The Hatch Security Force will continue to issue badges for administrative (productivity-related) purposes. A successful hand geometry scan will become the sole means of positive identification. Plant personnel will continue to return their badges to a member of the Security Force upon exit from the Protected Area.

6. After an appropriate period of transition to allow all personnel with unescorted access to become familiar with the process, as determined by the Manager-Security, the Hatch Security Force will discontinue the practice of badge issuance. At that time, all personnel with unescorted access privileges will be allowed to retain their badges at all times while either on or off the Owner-Controlled Area. Plant Hatch was previously granted an exemption to 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) by NRC letter dated 12/8/97 in order to facilitate a transition to the use of biometric screening for personnel access control.

SNC does not consider the transition plan described above to constitute in any way a decrease to the effectiveness of the Plant Hatch Security Plan with respect to the control of access to the site Protected Area. Conversely, SNC considers the personnel access control measures to be taken during each phase of the transition to be at least equivalent to the approved measures currently in place. As indicated in the referenced Hatch exemption request dated 7/2/97, SNC will revise the Plant Hatch Security Plan and submit these changes to the NRC in accordance with 10 CFR 50.54(p) within sixty (60) days of completion of the transition process described above. The completion of the transition process is tentatively scheduled for the 1st quarter of the year 2000. A copy of this letter shall be maintained in the Hatch Physical Security Plan for reference purposes until the transition and 10 CFR 50.54(p) submittal processes are complete.

Should you have any questions in this regard, please contact this office.

Respectfully submitted,

H. L. Sumner, Jr.

SMS/eb

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Mr. P. H. Wells, Nuclear Plant General Manager
SNC Document Management (R-Type A02.001)

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C.
Mr. L. N. Olshan, Project Manager - Hatch

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