

April 13, 2000

Duke Energy Corporation
ATTN: Mr. W. R. McCollum
Vice President
Oconee Site
7800 Rochester Highway
Seneca, SC 29672

SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL SAFEGUARDS RESPONSE EVALUATION AT THE OCONEE
NUCLEAR PLANT

Dear Mr. McCollum:

The NRC is in the process of conducting operational safeguards response evaluations (OSREs) at nuclear power reactors. I wish to formally inform you that the Oconee Nuclear Plant, Units 1, 2, and 3 has been chosen for such a review scheduled for the week of June 5-9, 2000. This confirms the previously conducted telephonic scheduling.

The primary objective of the OSRE program is to evaluate the readiness of licensees' onsite security forces to respond to an external threat. The "onsite security forces" are those specified and committed to in the Oconee Physical Security Plan as the minimum number of armed responders always available to respond to a security contingency. This plan commitment could include those responders immediately available and those available at a later time. A focus of these reviews is the priorities established between plant operations and security departments for protection of equipment and the defensive strategies used. These reviews complement NRC's licensing and regional inspection functions.

An OSRE team includes a reactor safeguards specialist, and three NRC contractors. Additional assistance is provided by an inspector from the NRC regional office and an NRC resident inspector.

In developing its future exercise/drill program under the revised reactor oversight program, the NRC intends to incorporate operator actions in evaluation of the success of the scenarios. This can be accomplished by a post-exercise analysis with operational solutions factored in, and/or with involvement of operational staff as active participants during the exercise, if you choose. This is not intended to require the involvement of the on duty control room staff or the control room of the nuclear unit in the exercise. The NRC also intends to increase the realism of OSREs in the following ways:

1. The mock adversary force will be provided tours of the site only to the extent that a member of the public could tour the site, and
2. The NRC team and one of the NRC contractors will participate in table-top drills. These individuals will then brief the mock adversary force on the point of attack and the intended target set.

The first day on site begins with an entrance briefing, which will provide an overview of the team's objectives, the specific parameters of the design basis threat as they are applied in the OSRE, and anticipated activities for the duration of the visit. Any questions from your staff on methodology, parameters, or other matters are then addressed so that a common understanding can be reached. Also, the suggested schedule for the onsite activities is discussed, and key licensee contact persons are identified. It is through these contact persons that arrangements are made for knowledgeable licensee personnel to escort the OSRE evaluation team members during the review. After the entrance briefing, part of the OSRE evaluation team takes a general orientation tour of the protected area perimeter and potential target equipment sets. If necessary, part of the team will meet with appropriate site operations and/or engineering staff to identify the site-specific sets of target equipment to be used in table-top drills and actual onsite response exercises. The team will conduct several table-top, time-line response drills with response team leaders. The team will also observe actual response exercises, which should be conducted using normal exercise procedures and participants. Team participation will be limited to scenario selection and exercise observation. Additionally, the team will interview training staff and attend a live-fire weapons demonstration by licensee security officers to observe the weapons range, the courses of fire, and the familiarity and proficiency of officers with response weapons.

Please provide appropriate plant personnel support for the OSRE team during the scheduled evaluation. Specifically, security members will require escorts from the security training department, and may require an individual familiar with safety equipment location and functional capabilities. The team will make every effort to schedule its activities so as to avoid disruption of normal plant operations. The time that various team members spend on site may vary, but generally will range from eight to ten hours per day. Some of this time is expected to be during evening hours.

If you have any questions regarding the conduct of the operational safeguards response evaluation program which you wish to have answered prior to the team's visit, please contact David Orrik, Safeguards Section at (301) 415-3213, or David Thompson of the Region II staff at (404) 562-4647.

Sincerely,

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Anne T. Boland, Acting Chief
Plant Support Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270 and 50-287
License Nos. DPR-38, DPR-47 and DPR-287

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