

October 22, 1997

Mr. W. R. McCollum
Vice President, Oconee Site
Duke Energy Corporation
P. O. Box 1439
Seneca, SC 29679

SUBJECT: OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1, 2, AND 3 - NOTICE OF
CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS

Dear Mr. McCollum:

The Commission has forwarded the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity For a Hearing" to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

The notice relates to your application dated October 20, 1997, to amend the Oconee Nuclear Station, Units 1, 2, and 3 Technical Specifications surveillance requirements for the steam generator tubes. The changes would allow use of a rerolling process as an additional repair method for tube degradation found in the tubesheet region. The rerolling method is designed to ensure that the area of degradation will not serve as a pressure boundary once the repair roll is installed, thus, permitting the tube to remain in service.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

David E. LaBarge, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270, and 50-287

Enclosure: Notice

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

October 22, 1997

Mr. W. R. McCollum
Vice President, Oconee Site
Duke Energy Corporation
P. O. Box 1439
Seneca, SC 29679

SUBJECT: OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1, 2, AND 3 - NOTICE OF
CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS (TAC NOS. M99779,
M99780, M99781)

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. LaBarge".

David E. LaBarge, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270, and 50-287

Enclosure: Notice

cc w/encl: See next page

Oconee Nuclear Station

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE ENERGY CORPORATIONOCONEE NUCLEAR STATION UNITS 1, 2, AND 3DOCKET NOS. 50-269, 50-270, AND 50-287NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES, PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS
CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION, AND OPPORTUNITY FOR A HEARING

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-38, DPR-47, and DPR-55, issued to the Duke Energy Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Oconee Nuclear Station, Units 1, 2, and 3 located in Oconee County, South Carolina.

If approved, the proposed amendments to the Technical Specifications (TS) would allow use of a rerolling process as an additional repair method for steam generator tube degradation.

Currently, Unit 1 is shut down for its end-of-cycle 17 refueling outage. During a non-destructive examination of the hot leg tubesheet, indications of tube degradation were found in the upper tubesheet region of approximately 900 tubes in the 1B steam generator. The licensee has proposed use of a rerolling process to ensure that the area of degradation will not serve as a pressure boundary once the repair roll is installed, thus permitting the tube to remain in service. The current TS only allow use of a sleeving process to repair steam generator tubes, otherwise the tubes must be removed from service by plugging. Since the reroll process is not contained in the Oconee TS as an approved repair method, NRC staff approval of the amendments is necessary prior to exceeding 250°F in the Unit 1 Reactor Coolant System. Unit 1 is presently expected to restart in the third week of November 1997.

Therefore, the amendments must be processed prior to that date. Any delay would delay the startup, which requires that the amendments be processed under exigent circumstances.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendments, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6) for amendments to be granted under exigent circumstances, the NRC staff must determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

This proposed change has been evaluated against the standards in 10 CFR 50.92 and has been determined to involve no significant hazards, in that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not:

1. Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated?

No. The implementation of the tube reroll does not increase the probability of occurrence of an accident or the consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

Since reroll utilizes the original tube configuration and extends the roll expanded region, all of the design and operating characteristics of the steam generator and connected systems are preserved. The reroll joint length has been analyzed and tested for design, operating, and faulted condition loadings.

At worst case, a tube leak would occur with the result being a primary to secondary system leak. Should a tube leak occur, the impact is bounded by the ruptured tube evaluation which has been analyzed previously. The potential for a tube rupture is not increased by the use of the reroll process.

2. Create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from the accidents previously evaluated?

No. Operation of the steam generators with reroll repaired tubes does not create the possibility of a new or different accident from the accidents previously evaluated.

The potential failure of the tube due to the defect which required the tube to initially be repaired is covered during the qualification of the reroll process. Qualification testing indicates that normal and faulted leakage would be well below the Technical Specification limits. Since the normal and faulted leak rates are well within the Technical Specification limit, the analyzed accident scenarios are still bounding.

The new roll transition may eventually develop PWSCC [primary water stress-corrosion cracking] and require additional repair. Since the roll transition is located within the tubesheet, it is not possible for the degradation to result in a tube rupture. Additionally, industry experience with roll transition cracking has shown that PWSCC in roll transitions is normally short axial cracks, with extremely low leak rates. Finally, since the new roll transition is completely within the tubesheet there is no possibility of the repaired tube failing and impacting adjacent tubes.

In the unlikely event the reroll repaired tube failed and severed completely at the transition of the reroll region, the tube would retain engagement in the tubesheet bore, preventing any interaction with neighboring tubes. In this case, leakage is minimized and is well within the assumed leakage of the design basis tube rupture accident. In addition, the possibility of rupturing multiple steam generator tubes is not increased.

3. Involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety?

No. Based on the previous response, the protective boundaries of the steam generator are preserved.

A tube with degradation can be kept in service through the use of the reroll process. The new undegraded roll expanded interface created with the tubesheet satisfies all of the necessary structural, leakage, and heat transfer requirements. Since the joint is constrained within the tubesheet bore, there is no additional risk associated with tube rupture. Therefore, the analyzed accident scenarios remain bounding, and the use of the reroll process does not reduce the margin of safety.

Duke has concluded based on the above information that there are no significant hazards involved in this amendment request.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 14 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 14-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period, such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 14-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER a notice of issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D22, Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville,

Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC.

The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By November 28, 1997, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714 which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Oconee County Library, 501 West South Broad Street, Walhalla, South Carolina. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made a party to the proceeding; (2) the

nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to two weeks prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If the amendment is issued before the expiration of the 30-day hearing period, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. If a hearing is requested, the final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it immediately effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff, may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to M. J. Michael McGarry, III, Winston and Strawn, 1200 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the

Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(I)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendments dated October 20, 1997, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Oconee County Library, 501 West South Broad Street, Walhalla, South Carolina.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 22nd day of October 1997.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



David E. LaBarge, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation