



Duke Power
526 South Church St. EC07H
Charlotte, NC 28202
P. O. Box 1006 EC07H
Charlotte, NC 28201-1006
(704) 382-2200 OFFICE
(704) 382-4360 FAX

M. S. Tuckman
Executive Vice President
Nuclear Generation

March 8, 2002

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

Subject: Duke Energy Corporation
Oconee Nuclear Station Units 1, 2 and 3
Docket Nos. 50-269, 50-270 and 50-287
Oconee Nuclear Station Fuel Design Changes

By Letter dated November 17, 2000, Duke Energy Corporation submitted Framatome Technologies Incorporated (FTI) document 51-5010403-00, "Oconee Fuel Design Changes." This report evaluated the use of Mark B-11 fuel assemblies for the initial (partial) fuel reloads in 2001 at Oconee Nuclear Station (ONS). This report concluded that there would be no impact on the current PTS criteria, P-T Limits, or LTOP values for any ONS unit. Duke also stated that a second evaluation to determine the long term effect of equilibrium cycles of B-11 fuel would be completed in 2001.

By a letter from the NRC, dated December 18, 2000, addressed to Mr. M.S. Tuckman, the Staff responded to the previous letter, providing comments concerning the use of Mark B-11 fuel design at ONS.

Through phone conversations with D. E. LaBarge (NRC) on January 5, 2001 and Lambros Lois (NRC) on January 10, 2001, it was communicated to Duke that the NRC letter dated December 18, 2000, did not require an NRC submittal prior to the use of B-11 fuel. The NRC expectations were for Duke to review the issues identified and to take appropriate internal actions. No formal response to the NRC letter was necessary, since Duke provided the FTI evaluation "for information only".

A001

U.S. NRC
March 8, 2002
Page 2

Duke has completed its long term evaluations of Mark B-11 fuel. This evaluation extends the previous evaluations and ensures that over the sixty-year operational lifetime of the units, the safety standards associated with the structural toughness of the reactor vessel and internal components have an improved margin when implementing the Mark B-11 design or the same margin as that when loading Mark B10 fuel.

In addition to describing how the safety standards were evaluated and explaining the results, this long term evaluation addresses the NRC's comments in its letter dated December 18, 2000.

It is Duke's understanding that the NRC does not require any further submittals concerning this subject. Duke will document its review of the use of the Mark B-11 fuel through its normal processes. Therefore, no further submittals will be made concerning this issue.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Allison Jones-Young at (704) 382-3154.

Sincerely,



M.S. Tuckman

U.S. NRC
March 8, 2002
Page 3

xc:

L.A. Reyes
Regional Administrator, Region II
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
61 Forsyth St., S.W., Suite 23T85
Atlanta, GA 30303

L.N. Olshan, NRC Project Manager (ONS)
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O-14 H25
Washington DC 20555-0001

Lambros Lois, NRC
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O-10 B3
Washington DC 20555-0001

Matthew Mitchell, NRC
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O-7 D4
Washington DC 20555-0001

Barry Elliot, NRC
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O-7 D4
Washington DC 20555-0001

M.C. Shannon, NRC Resident Inspector (ONS)

U.S. NRC
March 8, 2002
Page 4

bxc:

L.F. Vaughn
L.E. Nicholson
M.T. Cash
A.D. J-Young
S.C. Newman
J.D. Gilreath
C.M. Breazeale
ELL