

December 27, 2002

W. G. Hairston III
President and Chief Executive Officer
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
40 Inverness Center Parkway
P.O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201

Dear Mr. Hairston:

I am responding to your letter to Chairman Richard A. Meserve, dated December 12, 2002.

Your letter requested that the Commission convene a safeguards level meeting with all Commissioners and industry representatives to discuss relevant concerns. The Commission and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff are aware of the keen interest of the nuclear industry's executives in the steps the NRC will take in revising its security regulations and guidance in the coming years. In the process, the NRC must strive to maintain a balance between the public's need for information in this important area and the need to protect the information that is vital to protection of the nuclear facilities.

In consideration of the comprehensive re-evaluation of safeguards programs underway at this time, the Commission plans to meet with industry executives in January 2003. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss security issues including planned revisions to the design basis threats, ongoing and long-term implementation of security measures, and the relative risk of nuclear facilities as part of the nation's critical infrastructure. I trust this responds to your request.

Sincerely,

/RA by

Joseph J. Holonich Acting For/

Roy P. Zimmerman, Director

Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

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