

December 30, 2002

Mr. J. W. Moyer, Vice President
Carolina Power & Light Company
H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant,
Unit No. 2
3581 West Entrance Road
Hartsville, South Carolina 29550

SUBJECT: H. B. ROBINSON STEAM ELECTRIC PLANT, UNIT NO. 2 - RESPONSE TO NRC BULLETIN 2002-02, "REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL HEAD AND VESSEL HEAD PENETRATION NOZZLE INSPECTION PROGRAMS" (TAC NO. MB5916)

Dear Mr. Moyer:

On August 9, 2002, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin 2002-02, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head and Vessel Head Penetration Nozzle Inspection Programs." The Bulletin requested addressees to provide information related to their reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head and vessel head penetration (VHP) nozzle inspection programs for their respective facilities, including a summary discussion of inspection program plans to supplement their required visual inspections with non-visual nondestructive examination methods, or justification for reliance on visual examinations as the primary method to detect degradation. Addressees were requested to respond to Item (1) of the Bulletin within 30 days of its issuance, or within 15 days of its issuance, to provide an alternative course of action, including the basis for acceptability of the proposed action.

By letter dated September 9, 2002, you provided a response to Item (1) of the Bulletin, indicating the plans to perform RPV head and VHP nozzle inspections at H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant, Unit No. 2 (HBRSEP2). The response also indicated that HBRSEP2 is in the category of plants considered to have high susceptibility to RPV head and VHP cracking, based on a susceptibility ranking of greater than 12 effective degradation years.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response to Item (1) of the Bulletin in which you committed to perform bare metal visual examination of the RPV head and volumetric nondestructive examination (NDE) of the VHP penetrations and associated J-groove welds, during the fall 2002 refueling outage for HBRSEP2. The NRC staff finds the combination of NDE methods performed for this refueling outage is sufficient to demonstrate compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and adequate to provide reasonable assurance of the public health and safety, if implemented properly with qualified and demonstrated equipment, personnel, and procedures.

The NRC staff notes your response stated that the frequencies of future supplemental examinations will be determined at a later date based on additional inspection results and other industry information. You are requested to provide a summary description, as requested in Bulletin 2002-02, of your inspection program no later than 90 days prior to the start of the refueling outage following the fall 2002 outage. The NRC staff's assessment of the adequacy

- 2 -

of your inspection program will be determined upon completion of a review at that time. Once completed, the NRC staff will initiate further discussions with you as warranted.

Please contact me at (301) 415-3025 if you have any questions on this issue.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Chandu P. Patel, Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-261

cc: See next page

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