



May 22, 2003

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington D.C. 20555

Subject: Catawba Nuclear Station Unit 2
Docket No. 50 -414
Response to NRC Order EA-03-009:
"Order Establishing Interim Inspection Requirements
for Reactor Pressure Vessel Heads at Pressurized Water
Reactors"

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.54(f), this letter and the associated attached Enclosure provide Duke Energy Corporation's (Duke's) response to specific items of NRC Order EA-03-009 for Catawba Nuclear Station. This Order requested plant-specific information as a result of NRC staff concerns regarding reactor pressure vessel head degradation and reactor coolant pressure boundary integrity.

Responses are provided for NRC Order EA-03-009 IV.E. These responses provide information concerning the results of reactor vessel head inspection.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Gregory S. Kent at (704)373-6032.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G.R. Peterson'.

G.R. Peterson

ENCLOSURES

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xc: L.A. Reyes
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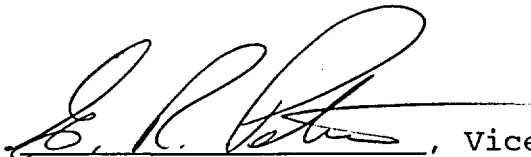
E.F. Guthrie
Senior Resident Inspector (CNS)

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Catawba Master File CN01DM
ELL Saluda River Electric Corporation
NC Municipal Power Agency No. 1
TR Puryear, NC Electric Membership Corporation - CN03G
Piedmont Municipal Power Agency

OATH or AFFIRMATION

G.R. Peterson, affirms that he is the person who subscribed his name to the foregoing statement, and that all the matters and facts set forth herein are true and correct to the best of his knowledge.

 , Vice President, Catawba Nuclear Site

Subscribed and sworn to me: May 22, 2003
Date

 , Notary Public
Deborah S. Rome



My Commission Expires: December 19, 2004
Date

ENCLOSURE I
Catawba Nuclear Station
Docket No. 50 -414
Response to NRC Orders EA-03-009

Requested Information

IV.E

- **For each inspection required in Paragraph C, the Licensee shall submit a report detailing the inspections results within sixty (60) days after returning the plant to operation.**
- **For each inspection required in Paragraph D, the Licensee shall submit a report detailing the inspections results within sixty (60) days after returning the plant to operation if a leak or boron deposits was found during the inspection.**

Response:

Catawba Unit 2 conducted a complete bare metal visual inspection of the reactor pressure vessel head and the pressure retaining components located above the head on March 9, 2003. The scopes of these inspections are consistent with Catawba's response to 1D of NRC Bulletin 2002-01 and IV.C.3.a and IV.D of NRC Order EA-03-009. These inspections indicated the presence of boron deposits on the reactor vessel head. The deposits were located predominately in the area of a conoseal penetration found leaking in the early 1990s (Reference Duke's 15 day response to NRC Bulletin 2002-01). Isotopic analysis of the boron indicated the deposits were likely from the past conoseal leaks. The deposits were cleaned from the carbon steel head and surrounding control rod drive mechanism housings. Evaluation of the reactor vessel head after removal of the boron deposits showed no degradation. Therefore, these inspections confirm that the Catawba Unit 2 head is free of degradation due to corrosion or wastage resulting from boric acid. No further corrective action was necessary.