



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION II
SAM NUNN ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931**

August 30, 2004

Duke Energy Corporation
ATTN: Mr. D. M. Jamil
Vice President
Catawba Nuclear Station
4800 Concord Road
York, SC 29745

**SUBJECT: MID-CYCLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND INSPECTION PLAN - CATAWBA
NUCLEAR STATION**

Dear Mr. Jamil:

On August 3, 2004, the NRC staff completed its mid-cycle plant performance assessment of the Catawba Nuclear Station. The mid-cycle review for Catawba involved the participation of all technical divisions in evaluating performance for the first half of the calendar year 2004 assessment cycle. The process included a review of performance indicators (PIs) for the most recent quarter and inspection results over the previous twelve months. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility. This will allow you an opportunity to prepare for these inspections and to inform us of any planned inspections that may conflict with your plant activities. This performance review and the enclosed inspection plan do not include physical protection information. A separate mid-cycle performance review letter, designated and marked as "Proprietary Information in accordance with 10 CFR 2.390(d)(1)," will include the physical protection review results and corresponding inspection plan.

Plant performance for the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC's Action Matrix, based on all inspection findings being classified as having very low safety significance (Green) and all PIs indicating performance at a level requiring no additional NRC oversight (Green). Therefore, we plan to conduct baseline inspections at your facility through March 31, 2006, as well as the following non-reactor oversight program inspections: (1) routine inspections of activities associated with your planned Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation; (2) safety issue inspections concerning the reactor pressure vessel lower head penetration nozzles (NRC Bulletin 2003-02) and the reactor containment sump (NRC Bulletin 2003-01); and (3) operator licensing examinations. Also during the Fall 2004 refueling outage, an inspection of your response to NRC Bulletin 2004-01: Inspection of Alloy 82/182/600 Materials Used in the Fabrication of Pressurizer Penetrations and Steam Space Piping Connections at Pressurized-Water Reactors, will be conducted using a Temporary Instruction. The Temporary Instruction is currently in draft form.

The enclosed inspection plan details the inspections, less those related to physical protection, scheduled through March 31, 2006. The inspection plan is provided to minimize the resource impact on your staff and to allow for scheduling conflicts and personnel availability to be resolved in advance of inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due

to their ongoing and continuous nature. The inspections in the last twelve months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the end-of-cycle review meeting.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

If circumstances arise which cause us to change the inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact me at (404)562-4550 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Robert C. Haag, Chief
Reactor Projects Branch 1
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-413, 50-414
License Nos.: NPF-35, NPF-52

Enclosure: Catawba Inspection/Activity Plan

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