

January 14, 1998

Tennessee Valley Authority
ATTN: Mr. O. J. Zeringue
Chief Nuclear Officer and
Executive Vice President
6A Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF LICENSEE PERFORMANCE (SALP) WATTS BAR
NUCLEAR PLANT - REPORT NO. 50-390/97-99

Dear Mr. Zeringue:

The NRC Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) has been completed for your Watts Bar facility. The facility was evaluated for the period of November 10, 1996, through December 6, 1997. The results of the evaluation are documented in the enclosed SALP report. This report will be discussed with you at a public meeting to be held at the Watts Bar site on January 29, 1998, at 11:00 a.m.

Watts Bar Nuclear Plant performance was assessed in four functional areas: Engineering, Maintenance, and Plant Support were determined to be superior; Plant Operations was considered to be good.

The SALP report makes note of excellent self-assessments across functional areas. This is indicative of management establishing high standards of performance and carefully monitoring the outcomes.

In the Plant Operations area, several challenges with configuration control and attention to detail were noted to continue from the previous evaluation period; but overall performance was noted to be improved. Maintenance activities were effectively managed as indicated by reliable safety equipment and low backlogs. In the Engineering area, strong support to plant operations continued. In the Plant Support area, programs for radiological controls, emergency planning, and fire protection were found to be excellent. Improvement was also noted in the physical security program, with superior audits and corrective actions.

This was the second 12-month SALP period after issuance of the operating license, and in accordance with NRC policy, the evaluation frequency will be extended commensurate with the facility's performance.

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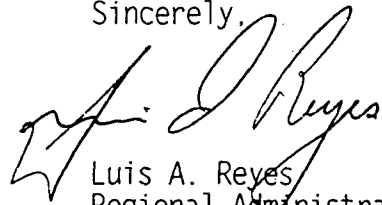


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In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room. I look forward to discussing this assessment with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Luis A. Reyes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Luis" and last name "Reyes" clearly distinguishable.

Luis A. Reyes
Regional Administrator

Docket No. 50-390
License No. NPF-90

Enclosure: Watts Bar SALP Report

cc w/encl: (See page 3)

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cc w/encl:
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Meigs County Courthouse
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Watts Bar Nuclear Plant
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Federal Emergency Management Agency
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