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VELAN

August 9, 1985

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Washington, D.C. 20555

Attention: Mr. Edward L. Jordan, Director
Division of Emergency Preparedness
and Engineering Response

Reference: Information Notice No. 85-59
Valve Stem Corrosion Failures
SSINS No.: 6835

Gentlemen:

I find it most unusual to discuss in general terms 410 stainless steel valve stem corrosion in 1985 and refer to an incident at Oconee 1 in December 1971, or 14 years ago, blaming Velan valves for the incident without analyzing the real causes and circumstances under which it occurred.

I hope you will agree with my objections, having considered the technical background of the incident.

In 1969, Duke Power issued a Valve Specification, specifying as stem material 410 Stainless Steel for Austenitic 316 SS valves. We found it unusual and unacceptable to use 410 material for a stem in an austenitic valve and recommended 316 stems. This was rejected by Duke. The 17-4 PH material was not an acceptable material for use in nuclear service at that time and became a standard material a few years later.

It is quite obvious that the 13% chrome stainless stem installed in a wet packing chamber surrounded by an austenitic stainless wall would be exposed to substantial corrosion, even if properly tempered. However, only 6 stems out of 2600 valves showed corrosion stress cracking.

Actually, the valves were replaced by Kerotest diaphragm valves which caused a lot of problems and are being replaced by bellows seal valves.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours very truly,
VELAN VALVE CORPORATION

A.K. Velan
President

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