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 REID, R.W. Operating Reactors Branch 4

SUBJECT: Responds to NRC concern re voiding during transients in B&W plants void formation is not occurring in identified transients & does not occur in normal operational transients. Forwards evaluation.

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STEAM PRODUCTION

February 13, 1980

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Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Attention: Mr. R. W. Reid, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch No. 4

Re: Concern For Voiding During Transients In B&W Plants
R. W. Reid to All Licensees of B&W Plants, January 9, 1980
Oconee Nuclear Station, Units 1, 2, 3
Docket Nos. 50-269, -270, -287

Dear Sir:

In the above referenced letter the staff raised the concern that void formation may be occurring in the reactor vessel of B&W plants during normal operational transients. This suspected phenomenon was considered to be the cause of certain transient characteristics which were detailed in enclosures to the letter. This concern has been reviewed by Duke Power Company and by Babcock & Wilcox and we conclude that void formation is not occurring in the identified transients and does not occur in normal operational transients. The pressure and temperature combinations necessary for saturated conditions do not occur in the reactor coolant system outside of the pressurizer in the range of RCS temperatures and pressures characterized by these transients. A detailed analysis of the identified transients and the potential for voiding is attached to this letter. A brief summary of the conclusions of this evaluation follows:

- 1) The temperatures expected in the reactor coolant system including possible stagnant regions, pressurizer outsurge, and metal heat are not high enough to cause voiding for the associated system pressures.
- 2) The system pressure decay rate and turnaround can be attributed to normal system response to changing primary-to-secondary heat transfer based on steam generator conditions, normal control system actuation of valves, pumps, pressurizer heaters, etc., or operator action.

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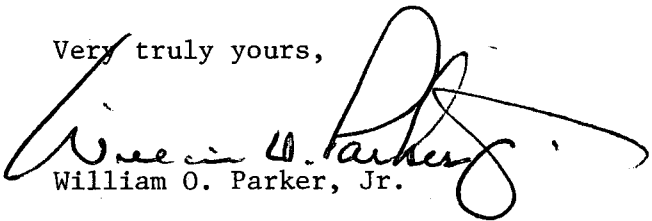
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Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director
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- 3) Utilizing a mass/volume balance for the identified transients, any production of steam outside the pressurizer is improbable.
- 4) The identified transient data does not contain any significant discrepancies between logged and expected data trends.

We hope that this evaluation will resolve the Staff's concerns on the identified transient data. If additional discussion on this matter is deemed necessary, please contact R. L. Gill of our Licensing Unit (704-373-5826) for arranging a meeting.

Very truly yours,


William O. Parker, Jr.

GBS:scs

Attachment