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Honorable Nunzio J. Palladino
Chairman
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Dr. Palladino:

SUBJECT: ACRS REPORT ON THE VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1
 AND 2

During its 304th meeting, August 8-10, 1985, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards reviewed the application of the Georgia Power Company (Applicant), acting on behalf of itself and as agent for the Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia, the Oglethorpe Power Corporation, and the City of Dalton, Georgia, for licenses to operate the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2. The ACRS reported on the construction permit application for this plant on April 16, 1974. The Georgia Power Company also operates the two-unit Hatch Plant, Unit 1 of which has been operating since 1974. Members of the ACRS Subcommittee on Vogtle Electric Generating Plant toured the facility on July 18, 1985 and met in Augusta, Georgia on July 18-19, 1985 to discuss the application. During our review we had the benefit of discussions with representatives and consultants of the Applicant, the Southern Company Services, Inc., Westinghouse Electric Corporation, and the NRC Staff. The Subcommittee also received oral comments from members of the public. We also had the benefit of the documents referenced.

The Vogtle plant is located near Augusta, Georgia. The plant was originally planned as a four-unit station but has been scaled down to two units. Each unit is a four loop Westinghouse pressurized water reactor (PWR) with a rated power level of 3411 MWt. The nuclear steam supply system is similar to several other previously reviewed PWRs, such as Comanche Peak and Wolf Creek. The Applicant has substituted the more advanced Westinghouse Model F steam generators for the originally proposed Model D.

Construction of Unit 1 is about 80 percent complete while that of Unit 2 is about 50 percent. The Applicant currently estimates the fuel load date for Unit 1 to be December 1986 and for Unit 2 to be about 1.5 years later. Should there be a significant delay in this schedule, we would expect to examine the need for additional review of Unit 2.

In its Safety Evaluation Report, the NRC Staff identified a number of open issues that it needed to resolve prior to the granting of operating licenses. During our meeting, the NRC Staff reported that a number of these issues had been resolved, and we believe the remainder can be dealt with satisfactorily.

NRC Staff reports of inspections since 1977 have revealed relatively few deficiencies and the Applicant has been responsive to the NRC findings. To assure compliance with the commitments made in the Final Safety

Analysis Report, the Applicant has instituted a Readiness Review Program. This program includes an independent design review and an NRC review of the findings. In addition, in 1983, the Applicant initiated a Quality Concern Program which permitted anyone with a concern regarding the quality of the Vogtle units to express it confidentially or anonymously and have it investigated and resolved. We believe that the Vogtle units have been conservatively designed and constructed and that the management has been alert to the changing state of the nuclear industry and has taken steps to upgrade the plant over its long construction life.

We believe that, subject to the resolution of the remaining open issues identified by the NRC Staff, and subject to satisfactory completion of construction, staffing, and preoperational testing, there is reasonable assurance that the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2, can be operated at power levels up to 3411 MWt without undue risk to the health and safety of the public.

Sincerely,

David A. Ward
Chairman

References:

1. Georgia Power Company, "Final Safety Analysis Report, Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Unit 1 and Unit 2," Volumes 1-33 and Amendments 1-17
2. U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, "Safety Evaluation Report Related to the Operation of Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2," USNRC Report NUREG-1137, dated June 1985
3. Written statement and addendum by W. F. Lawless dated July 19, 1985

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