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 FACIL: 50-389 St. Lucie Plant, Unit 2, Florida Power & Light Co. 05000389
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 THADANI, A. C. Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Director (Post 870411)

SUBJECT: Emphasizes need to adhere to previously agreed upon schedule for review of CENPD-275-P, "C-E Methodology for Core Design Containing Gadolinia-Urania Burnable Absorbers," in order to support reload for Cycle 5 of plant.

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COMBUSTION ENGINEERING

June 29, 1987
LD-87-035

Mr. Ashok C. Thadani
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attn: Document Control Desk
Washington, D. C. 20555

Subject: Review of C-E Analysis Methods for Gadolinium Bearing Fuel

Reference: A) Letter, A. E. Scherer (C-E) to J. L. Funches (NRC),
LD-87-019, April 22, 1987

50-389 B) CENPD-275-P, C-E Methodology for Core Designs
Containing Gadolinia-Urania Burnable Absorbers

Dear Mr. Thadani:

In April of this year, Combustion Engineering submitted a topical report for NRC review describing analyses methods for assessing the performance of Gadolinium bearing fuel [References (A) and (B)]. Through various communications with the NRC staff (most recently between Charles Brinkman of my staff and Wayne Hodges of your organization), it is our understanding that review of this topical report is being delayed as a result of the recent NRC reorganization. Due to the existing requirement to support a Florida Power & Light Company reload for their St. Lucie Unit 2 plant in Cycle 5, I am writing to you to emphasize the need for the NRC to adhere to the previously agreed upon review schedule.

Prior to submittal of the topical report for review, Combustion Engineering and Florida Power & Light met with members of the NRC staff in November, 1986 to discuss the appropriate technical content of the gadolinium report and to establish the schedule for its review. Members of the NRC staff at the meeting were Messrs. C. Thomas, RSB Branch Chief at that time; D. Fieno, the responsible RSB reviewer; C. Beyer, the NRC consultant from PNL; and E. Tourigny, the Florida Power and Light project manager. The review schedule which was agreed upon at the meeting called for Combustion Engineering submittal of the topical report in April, 1987 with NRC completion of review by December, 1987. This schedule was, and still is, necessary to support a planned Florida Power & Light full reload batch of Gadolinia-Urania fuel in their St. Lucie Unit 2

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plant in Cycle 5. Purchase of the fuel for this cycle is scheduled for March, 1988 with Cycle 5 startup expected in May, 1989. As a result of NRC's stated ability to support the required review schedule, a significant amount of effort was invested to complete the report on time. This included the incorporation of additional benchmarking material at the request of the NRC staff present at the November meeting. Furthermore, contractual agreements have been entered into and finalized as a result of the November agreements. Extended delay of the topical report review would adversely affect the entire chain of events on this important licensing action.

Combustion Engineering is prepared to provide whatever support is necessary to reestablish the agreed upon review schedule. We, therefore, request that you review any existing NRC scheduler conflicts and advise us as to what actions are necessary in order to reestablish an acceptable schedule. We would be happy to meet with you, and your staff, at your earliest convenience to discuss this important subject.

If you have any questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to call me or Mr. C. M. Molnar of my staff at (203) 285-5205.

Very truly yours,

COMBUSTION ENGINEERING, INC.



A. E. Scherer
Director
Nuclear Licensing

AES:ss

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