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DUKE POWER COMPANY

Power Building 422 South Church Street, Charlotte, N. C. 28242

Regulatory Docket File

VICE PRESIDENT STEAM PRODUCTION

December 28, 1976



TELEPHONE AREA 704

Mr. Benard C. Rusche Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Washington, D. C. 20555

Attention: Mr. A. Schwencer, Chief Operating Reactors Branch #1

Re: Oconee Nuclear Station Docket Nos. 50-269, -270, -287

Dear Mr. Rusche:

Our September 5, 1975 letter requested an exemption from the provisions of 10CFR50, Appendix J concerning the testing of containment airlocks. It was our interpretation that Section III.D.2 of Appendix J to 10CFR50 requires a Type B test to be performed at six-month intervals; however, those airlocks which are opened during such intervals were to be tested after each opening. Our letter described the design features of the Oconee containment airlocks which made this requirement impractical.

In your letter dated November 23, 1976, an acceptable approach to meeting the objectives of Appendix J was described. This requires, at six-month intervals, that the entire airlock assembly shall be leak tested at the peak pressure, Pa. Additionally, should the airlock be opened during the interval between the six-month tests, the airlock door seals shall be tested within 72 hours of every first opening of a series of openings. This leak test may be performed at a lower pressure (e.g., manufacturer's recommended pressure) and the results conservatively extrapolated to a leakage rate at the accident pressure, Pa.

It is our conclusion that your interpretation of the intent of 10CFR50, Appendix J provides a suitable alternative for testing the Oconee containment airlocks. In the case of the Oconee design, however, only ' the outer door in each airlock has a double seal and is therefore testable. The inner door only has one seal and cannot be tested. Proposed Technical

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Mr. Benard C. Rusche Page 2 December 28, 1976

Specifications will be submitted by February 15, 1977 which incorporate these considerations into the testing of the Oconee containment airlocks.

Very truly yours, William O. Parker, Jr.

MST:vr