



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

Mr. S. A. White  
Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
6N 38A Lookout Place  
1101 Market Street  
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402-2081

Dear Mr. White:

On June 28 and 29, 1988, NRC senior managers met to review the performance of operating nuclear power plants licensed by the NRC. These meetings are conducted biannually to focus NRC resources on those plants and related issues of greatest safety significance. At this meeting, the Browns Ferry and Sequoyah Unit 1 facilities were categorized as requiring substantial improvement. Plants in this category have been identified as having significant weaknesses that warrant maintaining the plants in a shutdown condition until the licensee can demonstrate to the NRC that adequate programs have both been established and implemented to ensure substantial improvement.

With regard to Sequoyah Unit 2, which was previously categorized as requiring substantial improvement, the NRC notes that TVA has implemented the initial phases of its corrective action program, Commission approval prior to startup was granted, and operational performance to date has been generally satisfactory. Therefore, Sequoyah Unit 2 is now categorized as requiring close monitoring. Plants in this category have been identified as having weaknesses that warrant increased NRC attention from both headquarters and the regional office.

A summary of NRC discussions relating to Browns Ferry and Sequoyah is provided below:

Matters discussed included TVA's reorganization of the Office of Nuclear Power, recent operating performance at Sequoyah Unit 2, and the status of completion of various technical programs at Sequoyah Unit 1 and Browns Ferry. Discussion of organizational issues centered on the need for TVA to identify experienced, proven managers for permanent assignment to key positions now being filled by temporary contract personnel.

In reviewing operational performance at Sequoyah Unit 2 since startup on May 13, 1988, NRC management noted shortcomings in personnel performance and secondary systems maintenance as areas contributing to the series of reactor trips experienced during initial operations. Subject to successful completion of commitments and planned programs for Sequoyah Unit 1, restart activities for this unit were considered to be progressing satisfactorily.

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Browns Ferry discussions highlighted the fact that many technical programs described in the Browns Ferry Nuclear Performance Plan have yet to be approved and fully implemented. TVA estimates startup of Browns Ferry Unit 2 in the December 1988 - February 1989 time frame.

An NRC Commission meeting open to the public has been scheduled for July 13, 1988, to review the results of this latest meeting of NRC managers. Mr. James Partlow, the Director of the Office of Special Projects, has recently discussed the basis for our conclusions with regard to the Browns Ferry and Sequoyah facilities with you.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,



Victor Stello, Jr.  
Executive Director  
for Operations