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Energy to Serve Your WorldSM

LCV-1608-D

Docket No.: 50-425

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D. C. 20555

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Response to NRC Bulletin 2002-01, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head
Degradation and Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary Integrity," for
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 2 (TAC NO. MB4589)

On July 12, 2002, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff held a telephone conference with the staff of Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) to discuss the reactor vessel head inspections, performed and planned, for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Unit 2. This call was conducted as a result of the identification of recent reactor vessel head degradation, as discussed in NRC Bulletin 2002-01, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head Degradation and Reactor Coolant pressure Boundary Integrity." SNC's submittal of March 28, 2002, which provided the required 15-day response to NRC Bulletin 2002-01, was used during the conference call. The NRC's question and SNC's reply are documented for the record in the attachment to this letter.

Mr. J. B. Beasley, Jr. states that he is a Vice President of SNC and is authorized to execute this oath on behalf of SNC, and to the best of his knowledge and belief, the facts set forth in this letter are true.

If there are any questions, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

J. B. Beasley, Jr.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 14th day of August 2002.

Notary Public

My Commission expires: 11/10/02



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JBB/BHW
Attachment

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Mr. J. T. Gasser
Mr. M. Sheibani
SNC Document Management

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mr. L. A. Reyes, Regional Administrator
Mr. F. Rinaldi, Licensing Project Manager, NRR
Mr. J. Zeiler, Senior Resident Inspector, Vogtle

Attachment

Response to NRC Bulletin 2002-01, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head
Degradation and Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary Integrity," for
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 2 (TAC NO. MB4589)

NRC Question

For Vogtle Unit 2, clarify whether or not boric acid deposits from the conoseals on control rod drive mechanism numbers 75 and 76 reached the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head. In addition, discuss whether or not these deposits were cleaned off of the RPV head.

SNC Response

The work history for the repair of the conoseals at the RPV head penetrations 75 and 76 indicates that the leaks were cleaned and that the affected surfaces were evaluated for corrosion, but none was found. Work practices and procedural guidance would have required that the complete extent of the leakage would have been cleaned and evaluated for corrosion. However, there is no specific record indicating that the RPV head insulation was removed to allow examination of the carbon steel surfaces below the conoseals. These two particular penetrations are located around the outer perimeter of the RPV head and, as such, any leakage resulting in boric acid accumulations would most likely have been visible without removal of the head insulation. Also, there has been no other evidence of leakage in the past four outages. Therefore, SNC has high confidence that there has not been corrosion similar to that which occurred at Davis-Besse. However, because SNC does not have complete knowledge of the RPV head condition at penetrations 75 and 76, a complete 100-percent examination of the Unit 2 RPV head beneath the head insulation will be conducted during the upcoming refueling outage scheduled for October 2002.