

March 31, 2000

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.  
ATTN: Mr. J. B. Beasley  
Vice President  
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant  
P. O. Box 1295  
Birmingham, AL 35201

SUBJECT: PLANT PERFORMANCE REVIEW - VOGTLE NUCLEAR PLANT

Dear Mr. Beasley:

The purpose of this letter is to communicate our assessment of your performance and to inform you of our planned inspections at your facility. On March 1, 2000, we completed a plant performance review (PPR) of the Vogtle Nuclear Plant. We conduct these reviews to develop an integrated overview of the safety performance of each operating nuclear power plant. We use the results of the PPR in planning and allocating inspection resources and as inputs to our senior management meeting (SMM) process. This PPR evaluated inspection results and safety performance information for the period from February 1, 1999, through January 31, 2000, but emphasized the last six months to ensure that our assessment reflected your current performance. Our most recent summary of plant performance at Vogtle was provided to you in a letter dated March 19, 1999, and was discussed with you in a public meeting on May 28, 1999.

The NRC has been developing a revised reactor oversight process that will replace our existing inspection and assessment processes, including the PPR, the SMM, and the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP). We recently completed a pilot program for the revised reactor oversight process at nine participating sites and are making necessary adjustments based on feedback and lessons learned. We plan to begin initial implementation of the revised reactor oversight process industry-wide, including your facility, on April 2, 2000.

This PPR reflects continued process improvements as we make the transition into the revised reactor oversight process. You should notice that our assessment of plant performance is organized differently from our previous performance summaries. Instead of characterizing our assessment results by SALP functional area, we are organizing the results into the strategic performance areas embodied in the revised reactor oversight process. In addition, we have considered the historical performance indicator data that you submitted in January 2000 in conjunction with the inspection results in assessing your performance. The results of this PPR were used to establish the inspection plan in accordance with the new risk-informed inspection program (consisting of baseline and supplemental inspections). Although this letter incorporates some terms and concepts associated with the new oversight process, it does not reflect the much broader changes in inspection and assessment that will be evident after we have fully implemented our revised reactor oversight process.



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- 1. Plant Issues Enclosures:

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