

December 20, 1999

Arthur J. Rocque, Jr., Commissioner
Department of Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Recent SCONOx Pollution Prevention Control System Development

Dear Commissioner Rocque:

As you are aware, there are at least a dozen new large combined cycle turbine power plants proposed for New England that present a potentially significant impact to this region's air quality. As a result, the Region has been very active in reviewing both the permitting of these projects and associated air pollution control technologies.

During the last several months there has been a debate in New England over the technical feasibility and commercial availability for large turbines of the ammonia-free air pollution control technology "SCONOx".

In order to move forward with the Region's review and oversight of new power permitting in the region, EPA-New England staff have been closely monitoring developments regarding the SCONOx technology. In this connection, we recently contacted ABB Alstom Power, the exclusive licensee of the SCONOx technology for large gas turbine power plants, to determine the results of their year long testing program for SCONOx application to large turbines.

On November 19, 1999, the Region issued a letter outlining the scope and results of ABB's development program and asked ABB to confirm our understanding as described in the letter. A complete discussion of the Region's technical concerns and major elements of ABB's SCONOx design and testing program are found in the November 19, 1999 letter (attachment #1). With ABB's extensive testing and confirmation of our November 19, 1999 letter (attachment #2), we have concluded that our earlier technical concerns about SCONOx have been resolved, and that there are no known scale-up concerns with SCONOx. Consequently, it is our view that SCONOx is a technically feasible control option for large combined cycle turbine projects.

ABB Alstom's December 1, 1999 announcement of the commercial availability of SCONOx for large turbines also confirms our view that SCONOx is now a commercially available control option for large combined cycle gas-fired turbine projects.

Based on the information currently available to us, the Region now considers SCONOx a technically feasible and commercially available air pollution control technology that is expected to obtain emission levels for criteria pollutants such as NOx, CO and VOC comparable or superior to previously-applied technologies for large combined cycle turbine applications. Consequently, we expect that henceforth your state will require a full evaluation of SCONOx as part of any BACT analysis for a large combined cycle power generating facility seeking a permit.

Sincerely,

John P. DeVillars
Regional Administrator

Attachments

cc: Carmine DiBattista, CT DEP