

No. 93-102
Tel. 301/504-2240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Friday, July 23, 1993)

NRC ISSUES POLICY STATEMENT ON TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION
IMPROVEMENTS FOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Final Policy Statement on technical specifications improvements for NRC-licensed nuclear power plants.

The Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, mandates that technical specifications be included in nuclear power plant operating licenses and they cannot be changed by licensees without specific NRC approval.

However, since 1969 there has been a trend towards including in technical specifications not only those requirements derived from the analyses and evaluation included in the plant's safety analysis report but also essentially all other NRC requirements governing the operation of nuclear power plants.

This is due in part to a lack of well-defined criteria for what should be included in technical specifications and has contributed to the volume of technical specifications and to the several-fold increase in the number of license amendment applications to effect changes in the technical specifications.

In the Commission's view, this has diverted both NRC staff and licensee attention from the more important requirements in these documents to the extent that it has resulted in an adverse but unquantifiable impact on safety.

The policy statement addresses these concerns by establishing the Commission's policy with respect to the scope and purpose of technical specifications, establishing a specific set of objective criteria as guidance for determining which regulatory requirements and operating restrictions should be included in technical specifications and encouraging licensees to implement a voluntary program to update their technical specifications to be consistent with vendor-specific standard technical specifications.