

No. 95-32  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(Monday, March 27, 1995)

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received two reports from its independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. The attached reports, in the form of letters, comment on a proposed amendment to the NRC's rule on license renewal for nuclear power plants and a proposed revision to the decommissioning rule for nuclear power reactors.

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Attachments:  
As stated

March 14, 1995

The Honorable Ivan Selin  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Selin:

SUBJECT: PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT  
LICENSE RENEWAL RULE (10 CFR PART 54)

During the 419th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, March 9-10, 1995, we discussed with the NRC staff their proposal for the amendment to the License Renewal Rule (10 CFR Part 54). We also heard from representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company on this matter. We had the benefit of the documents referenced.

The staff is proposing to revise the requirements contained in the rule to make it clearer and simpler and to allow more flexibility in its implementation. The intent of the amended rule continues to be to ensure that operation beyond the term of the original operating license will not jeopardize the public health and safety and that the current licensing basis will be preserved.

The amended rule is better integrated with the Maintenance Rule, and thereby provides greater coherence to the regulatory process. We agree that the proposed amendment to the current License Renewal Rule takes proper account of the existing licensee programs and provides a more stable and predictable license renewal process.

Sincerely,

T. S. Kress  
Chairman

References:

1. Memorandum dated February 9, 1995, from W. T. Russell, Chair, License Renewal Rule Steering Group, to J. T. Larkins, Executive Director, ACRS, Subject: Transmittal of the 10 CFR Part 54 Statements of Consideration and Rule Language Associated With the Amendment to the License Renewal Rule
2. Staff Requirements Memorandum dated June 24, 1994, from John C. Hoyle, Acting Secretary, to James M. Taylor, Executive Director for Operations, NRC, Subject: SECY-94-140 - Proposed Amendment to the Nuclear Power Plant License Renewal Rule (10 CFR Part 54)
3. SECY-94-140 dated May 23, 1994, from James M. Taylor, Executive Director for Operations, NRC, for the Commissioners, Subject: Proposed Amendment to the Nuclear Power Plant License Renewal Rule (10 CFR Part 54)

March 17, 1995

The Honorable Ivan Selin  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Selin:

SUBJECT: PROPOSED RULEMAKING - REVISION TO 10 CFR PARTS 2,  
50, AND 51 RELATED TO DECOMMISSIONING OF NUCLEAR  
POWER REACTORS

During the 419th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, March 9-10, 1995, we reviewed the proposed rule on decommissioning of nuclear power reactors. During our review, we had discussions with representatives of the NRC staff and the Nuclear Energy Institute. We had the benefit of the document referenced.

The proposed revision to the decommissioning rule appears to allow significant flexibility for different possible circumstances under which a nuclear plant may cease operation and transition into the decommissioning mode. The proposed revision to the rule reduces unnecessary burdens on both the licensees and NRC staff.

We believe that the proposed rule should be issued for public comment. We are concerned, however, that the proposed rule has not been founded on a risk basis. Realistic risk analyses for decommissioning nuclear power reactors have not been done. Consequently, there is no clear relationship between the requirements being retained in the revised rule and the realistic risks to the public health and safety and the environment posed by decommissioning. The revised rule may still impose unnecessary burdens on licensees and may make excessive demands on NRC resources. We hope that steps can be taken in the near future to establish a risk basis for reformulating 10 CFR Parts 2, 50, and 51. We believe this is an issue on which comment from the industry and the public should be sought.

Sincerely,

T. S. Kress  
Chairman

Reference:

Memorandum dated January 27, 1995, from Bill Morris, Director, Division of Regulatory Applications, RES, to John Larkins, Executive Director ACRS, forwarding Proposed Rule to Amend 10 CFR Parts 2, 50, and 51

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