

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE DIVISION OF REACTOR LICENSING

SUPPORTING AMENDMENT NO. 5 TO LICENSE NO. DPR-50

METROPOLITAN EDISON COMPANY

DOCKET NO. 50-289

THREE MILE ISLAND NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT 1

Introduction

On December 13, 1974, the Metropolitan Edison Company (Met. Ed.) submitted an application for a license amendment. The proposed Technical Specification changes for Three Mile Island Unit 1 (TMI-1) clarify the maximum permissible temperature change rates for the pressurizer and the reactor coolant system. The licensee's submittal was made in response to our request, dated November 12, 1974, for such action.

Discussion

At the present time TMI-1 Technical Specifications 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.4 specify the temperature change rate for the reactor coolant system and pressurizer in "°F per hour". By specifying the temperature change rate in this manner the time interval over which the change is to be averaged is ambiguous. For example, if the primary system of a facility undergoes a 50° F increase in 10 minutes, it could be interpreted as being equivalent to a change of 300° F in an hour. In this case an interval of 10 minutes was chosen as the averaging period. This situation leads to needlessly conservative operation or perhaps a violation if compared to a Technical Specification limit stated in "°F per hour" (°F/hr).

The licensee has requested that the temperature change rates in Technical Specifications 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.4 be specified as "°F in any one hour". This change unambiguously specifies an averaging period of one hour. As a limit, it allows an instantaneous temperature change, up to the limits specified in Technical Specifications 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.4 on the condition that no further changes take place during the hour in question. This was the original intent of the Technical Specifications. We concur with the licensee that this change will effectively remove any ambiguity in the interpretation of these Technical Specifications by specifying an averaging period of one hour. Since the change merely involves nomenclature, there is no effect on normal operation or the consequences of any accident.

Conclusion

We have concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) because the change does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of accidents previously considered and does not involve a significant decrease in a safety margin, the change does not involve a significant hazards consideration, (2) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, and (3) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulation and the issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

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