

December 20, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: Richard L. Emch Jr, Section Chief
Section 1, Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management, NRR

FROM: David C. Trimble, Section Chief */RA/*
Operator Licensing and Human Performance Section
Operator Licensing, Human Performance
and Plant Support Branch
Division of Inspection Program Management, NRR

SUBJECT: CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION OPERATOR LICENSING
PROGRAM EXEMPTION TO PERFORM SIGNIFICANT
CONTROL MANIPULATIONS ON THE PLANT SPECIFIC
SIMULATOR IN LIEU OF THE ACTUAL PLANT REQUESTED
BY LETTER DATED OCTOBER 11, 2000

Plant Name: Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2
Utility Name: Duke Energy Corporation
Docket No.(s): 50-413, 50-414
TAC No.(s): MB0355, MB0356
Licensing Status: OL-FP NPF-35, OL-FP NPF-52
Responsible PD: II-2
Review Branch: IOLB
Review Status: Complete

The Operator Licensing, Human Performance and Plant Support Branch (IOLB) has completed its review of the above licensee's October 11, 2000, letter and supplement dated December 7, 2000 requesting an exemption for individuals in the current operator licensing class from the requirements of 10 CFR 55.31(a)(5), which requires that five significant control manipulations which affect reactivity or power level be performed on the actual plant as a prerequisite for operator or senior operator license eligibility. This exemption will allow the individual operator license applicants to perform the control manipulations on a simulator in lieu of using the actual plant. The Catawba individuals presently enrolled in the licensed operator training program cycle are scheduled to be administered an NRC operator licensing examination in April 2001.

The Catawba operator licensing training program, is a Commission approved training program, that is based on a systems approach to training and uses a simulation facility acceptable to the Commission.

In accordance with 10 CFR 55.31(a)(5) an applicant for an operator or senior operator license must provide evidence that the applicant, as a trainee, has successfully manipulated the controls of the facility for which a license is sought. This requirement pertains to the

experience of individual applicants for a operator or senior operator license, and not a facility license. The staff will be able to approve the requested exemption for the individuals currently enrolled in operator license training based upon evidence provided by the facility licensee that, with respect to the planned reactivity manipulation scenarios for these individuals, simulator fidelity is assured by adequate software controls and will be confirmed before the conduct of the reactivity manipulations.

Approval upon this basis is consistent with guidelines set forth in SECY 99-225, "Rulemaking Plan for Changes to 10 CFR Part 55 to Reduce Unnecessary Regulatory Burden Associated with the Use of Simulation Facilities in Operator Licensing," for interim regulatory relief in this area.

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