

Docket No. 50-271

MAY 22 1989

Mr. R. W. Capstick
Licensing Engineer
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power
Corporation
580 Main Street
Bolton, Massachusetts 01740-1398

Dear Mr. Capstick:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT -
APPENDIX R EXEMPTIONS (TAC 68857 & 72219)

Re: Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" for your information. This notice relates to your two separate submittals requesting exemptions to Appendix R. The first dated June 29, 1988 (TAC 66857) and the second dated February 2, 1989 (TAC 72219), requesting exemptions from certain requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, relative to the Fire Protection Program.

This notice is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

for Daniel G. McDonald
Richard H. Wessman, Director
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Projects I/II

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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UNITED STATES
CLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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acting
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Richard H. Wessman, Director
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Projects I/II

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

Mr. R. W. Capstick
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

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Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

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Dr. James H. Carpenter
Administrative Judge
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Adjudicatory File (2)
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
Panel Docket
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONVERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATIONDOCKET NO. 50-271ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of exemptions from certain requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, to the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (VY/licensee) for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station located at the licensee's site near Vernon, Vermont.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would grant exemptions from certain requirements of Appendix R of 10 CFR Part 50. Specifically, exemptions were requested from Section III.J and Section III G.2.a. to the extent that it requires:

- a. Section III.J - Emergency lighting units having at least an 8-hour battery power supply in all areas needed for operation of and access to and from safe shutdown equipment.
- b. Section III G.2.a. - Separation of cables and equipment and associated non-safety circuits of redundant trains by a fire barrier having a three-hour rating.

Need for the Proposed Actions

To meet the requirements of Subsection III.J of Appendix R, at least an 8-hour emergency battery power supply would be provided for the northeast section of the torus catwalk.

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The proposed action (a) is needed to allow the licensee to supply emergency power from the emergency diesel generators rather than from an 8-hour battery power supply. The diesel generator would be available throughout the period emergency lighting is needed and greatly in excess of 8-hours should the need arise.

To meet the requirements of III.G.2.a of Appendix R, the wall between the Reactor Building and the Turbine Building, designated as a vital fire barrier wall would require a 3-hour fire rating, including penetrations in the wall.

The proposed action (b) is needed to permit qualification of a wall penetration so that the licensee can be relieved of maintaining a costly manned fire watch as required by the plant technical specifications. The licensee demonstrated in its February 2, 1989 submittal that the penetration in question provides the equivalent of three-hour separation required by Appendix R.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The proposed exemptions would provide an equivalent level of fire safety such that there is no increase in the risk of not achieving safe shutdown at the Vermont Yankee Station. Consequently, the probability of achieving safe shutdown has not been decreased and the post-accident radiological releases would not be greater than previously determined nor do the proposed exemptions otherwise affect radiological plant effluents. The proposed exemptions do not affect plant nonradiological effluents and will have no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological or nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemptions.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed exemptions, other alternatives need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the exemptions would be to require rigid compliance with the Appendix R requirements. Such action would not enhance the protection of the environment and would result in unjustified costs for the licensee.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of resources not considered previously in the Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's requests and did not consult other agencies or persons.

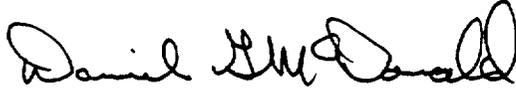
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemptions. Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the NRC staff concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this proposed action, see the licensee's letters dated June 29, 1988 and February 2, 1989. These letters are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. and at the Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 22nd day of May, 1989.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Daniel G. McDonald, Acting Director
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Regulations I/II