

July 23, 1997

50-272/311

Mr. Leon R. Eliason
Chief Nuclear Officer & President-
Nuclear Business Unit
Public Service Electric & Gas
Company
Post Office Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, NJ 08038

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF 10 CFR 73.55, "REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICAL PROTECTION OF LICENSED ACTIVITIES IN NUCLEAR POWER REACTORS AGAINST RADIOLOGICAL SABOTAGE," SALEM NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2, AND HOPE CREEK GENERATING STATION (TAC NOS. M97782, M97783 AND M97784)

Dear Mr. Eliason:

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" for your information. This assessment relates to your application dated January 17, 1997, which requested an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55 relating to the issuance, storage and retrieval of badges for personnel who have been granted unescorted access to the protected areas of the site. The proposed exemption will enable you to implement a hand geometry biometric system for site access control at the Salem/Hope Creek site.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

John F. Stolz, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Docket Nos. 50-272/311/354

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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Chief Nuclear Officer & President-
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Public Service Electric & Gas
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Salem/Hope Creek site.

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publication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John F. Stolz", is written over the typed name and title.

John F. Stolz, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-272/311/354

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. Leon R. Eliason
Public Service Electric & Gas
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Salem Nuclear Generating Station,
Unit 1 and 2, and
Hope Creek Generating Station

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONPUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC & GAS COMPANYPHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANYDELMARVA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANYATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC COMPANYSALEM NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2DOCKET NOS. 50-272 AND 50-311ANDPUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC & GAS COMPANYATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC COMPANYHOPE CREEK GENERATING STATIONDOCKET NO. 50-354ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations for Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-70, DPR-75, and NPF-57, issued to Public Service Electric & Gas Company (PSE&G, the licensee), for operation of the Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2, and Hope Creek Generating Station (Salem/Hope Creek), respectively.

The facilities consist of two pressurized water reactors, Salem Units 1 and 2, and a boiling water reactor, Hope Creek, at the licensee's site located in Salem County, New Jersey.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would allow implementation of a hand geometry biometric system of site access control such that photograph identification badges can be taken offsite.

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The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated January 17, 1997, for exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power reactors against radiological sabotage."

The Need for the Proposed Action:

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, paragraph (a), "General performance objective and requirements," the licensee shall establish and maintain an onsite physical protection system and security organization..."

Paragraph (1) of 10 CFR 73.55(d), "Access Requirements," specifies that "licensee shall control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area...." It is specified in 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) that "A numbered picture badge identification system shall be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escort." It also states that an individual not employed by the licensee (i.e., contractors) may be authorized access to protected areas without escort provided the individual "receives a picture badge upon entrance into the protected area which must be returned upon exit from the protected area..."

Currently, unescorted access into protected areas of the Salem/Hope Creek site is controlled through the use of a photograph on a combination badge and keycard. (Hereafter, these are referred to as a "badge"). The security officers at the entrance station use the photograph on the badge to visually identify the individual requesting access. The badges for both licensee employees and contractor personnel who have been granted unescorted access are issued upon entrance at the entrance/exit location and are returned upon exit. The badges are stored and are retrievable at the entrance/exit

location. In accordance with 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5), contractor individuals are not allowed to take badges offsite. In accordance with the plants' physical security plans, neither licensee employees nor contractors are allowed to take badges offsite.

The licensee proposes to implement an alternative unescorted access control system which would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges at the entrance/exit location and would allow all individuals with unescorted access to keep their badges with them when departing the site.

An exemption from 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) is required to permit contractors to take their badges offsite instead of returning them when exiting the site.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

Under the proposed alternative unescorted access control system, each individual who is authorized for unescorted entry into protected areas would have the physical characteristics of their hand (hand geometry) registered with their badge number in the access control system. When an individual enters the badge into the card reader and places the hand on the measuring surface, the system would record the individual's hand image. The unique characteristics of the extracted hand image would be compared with the previously stored template to verify authorization for entry. Individuals, including licensee employees and contractors, would be allowed to keep their badge with them when they depart the site.

Based on a Sandia report entitled "A Performance Evaluation of Biometric Identification Devices" (SAND91--0276 UC--906 Unlimited Release, Printed June 1991), and on its experience with the current photo-identification system, the licensee stated that the false acceptance rate of the proposed hand geometry

system is comparable to that of the current system. The licensee stated that the use of the badges with the hand geometry system would increase the overall level of access control. Since both the badge and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected area, the proposed system would provide for a positive verification process. Potential loss of a badge by an individual, as a result of taking the badge offsite, would not enable an unauthorized entry into protected areas. The licensee will implement a process for testing the proposed system to ensure continued overall level of performance equivalent to that specified in the regulation. The Physical Security Plan for the Salem/Hope Creek site will be revised to include implementation and testing of the hand geometry access control system and to allow licensee employees and contractors to take their badges offsite.

The access process will continue to be under the observation of security personnel. A numbered picture badge identification system will continue to be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escorts. Badges will continue to be displayed by all individuals while inside the protected area.

The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluent that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in

10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluent and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request. Such action would not change any current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of Hope Creek Generating Station," NUREG-1074, dated December 1984 or "Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of Salem Nuclear Generating Station Units 1 and 2," dated April 1973.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on February 19, 1997, the staff consulted with the New Jersey State Official, Mr. Dennis Zannoni, of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT


Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the

human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated January 17, 1997, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC and at the local public document rooms located at the Salem Free Public Library, 112 West Broadway, Salem, New Jersey, for Salem and at the Pennsville Public Library, 190 S. Broadway, Pennsville, New Jersey, for Hope Creek.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of July 1997.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


John F. Stolz, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation