

April 9, 1996

Mr. William R. McCollum
Site Vice President
Catawba Nuclear Station
Duke Power Company
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745-9635

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SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS - CATAWBA
 NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. M95104 AND M95105)

Dear Mr. McCollum:

The Commission has requested the Office of the Federal Register to publish the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for Hearing." This notice relates to your amendment application dated April 3, 1996, which would revise the hydrogen mitigation system Technical Specifications. The change would provide that, if neither the Train A or Train B igniter is operable in any one containment region, then there is an allowance of 7 days to restore one hydrogen igniter to OPERABLE status, or be in Hot Shutdown within the next 6 hours. This would be consistent with the guidance of the Standard TS for Westinghouse plants, NUREG-0431.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414

Enclosure: Notice

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 9, 1996

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Catawba Nuclear Station
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert E. Martin".

Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414

Enclosure: Notice

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. W. R. McCollum
Duke Power Company

Catawba Nuclear Station

cc:

Mr. M. S. Kitlan
Regulatory Compliance Manager
Duke Power Company
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745

North Carolina Electric Membership
Corporation
P. O. Box 27306
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Mr. Paul R. Newton
Legal Department (PB05E)
Duke Power Company
422 South Church Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242-0001

Senior Resident Inspector
4830 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745

J. Michael McGarry, III, Esquire
Winston and Strawn
1400 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Regional Administrator, Region II
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
101 Marietta Street, NW. Suite 2900
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

North Carolina Municipal Power
Agency Number 1
1427 Meadowood Boulevard
P. O. Box 29513
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0513

Max Batavia, Chief
Bureau of Radiological Health
South Carolina Department of
Health and Environmental Control
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Mr. Peter R. Harden, IV
Account Sales Manager
Westinghouse Electric Corporation
Power Systems Field Sales
P. O. Box 7288
Charlotte, North Carolina 28241

Mr. G. A. Copp
Licensing - EC050
Duke Power Company
526 South Church Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242-0001

County Manager of York County
York County Courthouse
York, South Carolina 29745

Saluda River Electric
P. O. Box 929
Laurens, South Carolina 29360

Richard P. Wilson, Esquire
Assistant Attorney General
South Carolina Attorney General's
Office
P. O. Box 11549
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Ms. Karen E. Long
Assistant Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
P. O. Box 629
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Piedmont Municipal Power Agency
121 Village Drive
Greer, South Carolina 29651

Elaine Wathen, Lead REP Planner
Division of Emergency Management
116 West Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603-1335

Mr. T. Richard Puryear
Owners Group (NCEMC)
Duke Power Company
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745

Dayne H. Brown, Director
Division of Radiation Protection
N.C. Department of Environment,
Health and Natural Resources
P. O. Box 27687
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-7687

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE POWER COMPANY, ET AL.DOCKET NOS. 50-413 AND 50-414NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES, PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS
CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION, AND OPPORTUNITY FOR A HEARING

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-35 and NPF-52 issued to the Duke Power Company (the licensee) for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, located in York County, South Carolina.

The proposed amendments would change the containment hydrogen mitigation system Technical Specifications (TS) to provide that, if neither the Train A or Train B igniter is operable in any one containment region, then there is an allowance of 7 days to restore one hydrogen ignitor to OPERABLE status, or be in Hot Shutdown within the next 6 hours. This would be consistent with the guidance of the Standard TS for Westinghouse plants, NUREG-1431. The current TS does not provide for inoperable ignitors on the two redundant trains being in the same containment region. Other administrative and editorial changes were proposed to TS 3/4.6.4.3 to provide consistency of format and text with the Standard TS (NUREG-1431). Associated changes were also proposed for the Bases. A recent performance of the 92-day ignitor surveillance test determined that one ignitor in Train B did not energize and had failed. The area of the containment covered by this ignitor cannot be accessed during power operation for repairs due to the radiation levels in this area.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendment, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

Criterion 1

The requested amendments will not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. No impact upon accident probabilities will be created, since the HIS [Hydrogen Ignition System] System is not an accident initiating system. In addition, allowance for a single location in the containment to be without an operable ignitor, is afforded by the low probability of the occurrence of a degraded core event that would generate hydrogen in amounts equivalent to a metal water reaction of 75% of the core cladding and the length of time after the event that operator action would be required to prevent hydrogen accumulation from exceeding this limit. Adjacent areas to the single area without an operable hydrogen ignitor provide capability to maintain the hydrogen concentrations during degraded core accidents [within] acceptable limits by flame propagation to the region without operable hydrogen ignitors. No impact on the plant response to any accident will be created (either design basis or beyond-design basis).

Criterion 2

The requested amendments will not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated. As stated previously, the HIS System is not an accident initiating system. No new accident causal mechanisms will be created as a result of adopting the requirements of NUREG-1431. Plant operation will not be affected by the proposed amendments and no new failure modes will be created.

Criterion 3

The requested amendments will not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. No adverse impact upon any plant safety margins will be created. As discussed previously, the allowance for a single containment region to be without operable hydrogen ignitors for 7 days will have no adverse consequences. No fission product barriers are being degraded. No change to the manner in which the units are operated is being made.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 30 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 30-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 30-day notice

period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER a notice of issuance and provide for opportunity for a hearing after issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D22, Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC.

The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By May 15, 1996, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR

2.714 which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If a hearing is requested, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it immediately effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Docketing and Services Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last 10 days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1-(800) 248-5100 (in Missouri 1-(800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number N1023 and the following message addressed to Herbert N. Berkow: petitioner's name and telephone number, date petition was mailed, plant name, and publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, and to Mr. Paul R. Newton, 422 South Church Street, Charlotte, NC 28202-0001, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(i)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated April 3, 1996, 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 room located at the York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of April 1996

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation