

March 18, 1999

Mr. G. R. Peterson
Site Vice President
Catawba Nuclear Station
Duke Energy Corporation
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745-9635

SUBJECT: CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2 - NOTICE OF
CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS (TAC NOS. MA4948
AND MA4949)

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The Commission has forwarded the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for Hearing" to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

This notice relates to your March 15, 1999, application, as supplemented by letter dated March 17, 1999, to revise the Technical Specifications, deleting Section 3.3.7, "Control Room Area Ventilation System (CRAVS) Actuation Instrumentation," and Section 3.3.8, "Auxiliary Building Filtered Ventilation Exhaust System (ABFVES) Actuation Instrumentation."

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Peter S. Tam, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Licensing Project Management
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

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter S. Tam".

Peter S. Tam, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414

Enclosure: Notice

cc w/encl: See next page

Catawba Nuclear Station

cc:

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Catawba Nuclear Station

cc:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE ENERGY CORPORATIONDOCKET 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 amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-35 and NPF-52, issued to Duke Energy Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, located in York County, South Carolina.

The proposed amendments would revise the Technical Specifications (TS), deleting Section 3.3.7, "Control Room Area Ventilation System (CRAVS) Actuation Instrumentation," and Section 3.3.8, "Auxiliary Building Filtered Ventilation Exhaust System (ABFVES) Actuation Instrumentation." The basis for the proposed deletion is that Sections 3.3.7 and 3.3.8 do not correctly reflect the design of the Catawba CRAVS and ABFVES control systems. At Catawba, the Solid State Protection System (SSPS) provides input to the diesel generator load sequencer, which, in turn, provides input to the CRAVS and ABFVES. Thus, the CRAVS and ABFVES are not directly actuated by the SSPS. However, the surveillance requirements currently specified by Sections 3.3.7 and 3.3.8 are written on the assumption that the CRAVS and ABFVES are directly actuated by the SSPS.

The licensee requested approval on an exigent basis pursuant to its request for enforcement discretion. The staff verbally granted the enforcement discretion on March 11, 1999, and affirmed it by a subsequent notice of enforcement discretion (NOED) letter dated

March 15, 1999. The NOED letter stated that the enforcement discretion is in effect until the issuance of amendments to revise Section 3.3.7 and 3.3.8. The staff intends to issue such amendments within 4 weeks of the NOED letter. This issuance schedule would not be accommodated by the normal 30-day notice to the public.

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

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6) for amendments to be granted under exigent circumstances, the NRC staff must determine 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:

First Standard

Implementation of this amendment would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. Approval of this amendment will have no effect on accident probabilities or consequences. No physical changes are being made to the plant design which will result in any increase in accident probabilities. Approval of this amendment will not result in a decrease in system or equipment reliability or availability. Therefore, there will be no impact on any accident consequences.

Second Standard

Implementation of this amendment would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated. No new accident causal mechanisms are created as a result of NRC approval of this amendment request. No changes are being made to the plant that will introduce any new accident causal mechanisms.

Third Standard

Implementation of this amendment would not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. Margin of safety is related to the confidence in the ability of the fission product barriers to perform their design functions during and following an accident situation. These barriers include the fuel cladding, the reactor coolant system, and the containment system. The performance of these fission product barriers will not be degraded by the implementation of this amendment. No safety margins will be impacted.

Based upon the preceding discussion, Duke Energy Corporation has concluded that the proposed amendment does not involve a significant hazards consideration.

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 14 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendments until the expiration of the 14-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 amendments before the expiration of the 14-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendments involve 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. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory

Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D59, 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 April 23, 1999 , the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendments 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 a 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 amendments 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 the amendments are issued before the expiration of the 30-day hearing period, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. If a hearing is requested, 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 amendments and make them immediately effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendments.

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 amendments.

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 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to Ms, Lisa F. Vaughn, Legal Department (PB05E), Duke Energy Corporation, 422 South Church Street, Charlotte, North Carolina, 28201, 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 amendments dated March 15, 1999, as supplemented by letter dated March 17, 1999, 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 18th day of March 1999.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter S. Tam". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Peter S. Tam, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation