

January 19, 1994

Docket No. 50-413

DISTRIBUTION

Mr. David L. Rehn
Vice President, Catawba Site
Duke Power Company
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745

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Dear Mr. Rehn:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT - CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT 1 (TAC NO. M88480)

The Commission has requested the Office of the Federal Register to publish the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for Hearing." This notice relates to your application dated January 10, 1994. The amendment would change the method of measuring the reactor coolant system flow rate (Technical Specification 4.2.5.3) during the 18-month surveillance for Catawba, Unit 1.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:
V. NERSES

Robert E. Martin, Project Manager
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Notice

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 19, 1994

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Mr. David L. Rehn
Vice President, Catawba Site
Duke Power Company
4800 Concord Road
York, South Carolina 29745

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert E. Martin".

Robert E. Martin, Project Manager
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Notice

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

Mr. David L. Rehn
Duke Power Company

Catawba Nuclear Station

cc:

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Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE POWER COMPANYDOCKET NO. 50-413NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE, 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 No. NPF-35 issued to Duke Power Company (the licensee) for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Unit 1, located in York County, South Carolina.

The proposed amendment would revise Technical Specification (TS) 3/4.2.5.3 which currently requires the determination of the reactor coolant system (RCS) flow rate by precision heat balance measurement at least once per 18 months. The precision heat balance measurement is used to calculate RCS flow based on gross steam generator thermal output and measurements of RCS hot and cold leg temperatures. Once the RCS flow is determined by this method, the cold leg elbow tap flow coefficients are adjusted to reproduce the RCS flow indication determined by the calorimetrics. Recently, the precision heat balance has been adversely affected by the hot leg temperature streaming effect and has been the cause of unsubstantiated RCS flow measurement decreases. Changes in the calorimetrics result from changes in core exit temperature and/or flow distributions that can significantly affect the average T-hot as measured by the hot leg RTDs. Elbow tap delta-Ps and analytical predictions of flow do not confirm the RCS flow rates determined by the periodic calorimetrics. It is proposed that the current requirements of

TS 4.2.5.3 be changed to require that the RCS flow rate be determined by measurements at least once per 18 months. By replacing the phrase "precision heat balance measurement" with "measurement," this will allow RCS flow determination by elbow tap delta-P measurement. The licensee states that the elbow tap delta-P method of flow determination was initially used at McGuire Nuclear Station and was dropped in favor of a precision calorimetric each cycle. At the time, November 1982, McGuire was having difficulty meeting the TS flow limit and the precision calorimetric was considered more accurate and allowed substantial margin gain. With the advent of more severe temperature and flow gradients in the hot legs, the precision calorimetrics were affected and resulted in nonphysical indicated flow decreases in the RCS. The elbow tap delta-P indications will provide an indication of flow which is not dependent on future changes in hot leg temperature measurement and, therefore, will provide an improvement in flow surveillance accuracy.

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:

- (1) This amendment will not significantly increase the probability or consequence of any accident previously evaluated.

No component modification, system realignment, or change in operating procedure will occur which could affect the probability of any accident or transient. The change in method of flow measurement will not change the probability of actuation of any Engineered Safeguard Feature or other device. The actual flow rate will not change. The consequences of previously-analyzed accidents will not change as a result of the new method of flow measurement.

- (2) This amendment will not create the possibility of any new or different accidents not previously evaluated.

No component modification or system realignment will occur which could create the possibility of a new event not previously considered. The elbow taps are already in place, and are used to monitor flow for the Reactor Protection System. They will not initiate any new events.

- (3) This amendment will not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

As described in [the licensee's application], the change in method of RCS flow measurement will provide a more accurate indication of the flow. The actual flow rate will not be affected. The revised setpoints for low reactor coolant flow are driven by changes to statistical allowances and do not represent substantive, or less conservative, changes. There is no significant reduction in a margin of safety.

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 P-223, Phillips Building, 7920 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, 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 20555.

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

By February 25, 1994 , 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 20555 and at the local public document room located at York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29730. 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 20555, 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 Loren R. Plisco: 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. Albert Carr, Duke Power Company, 422 South Church Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28242, 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 January 10, 1994, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20555 and at the local public document room located at the York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29730.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 19th day of January 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Victor Nerses, Acting Project Manager
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation