

December 2, 1994

Mr. Oliver D. Kingsley, Jr.
President, TVA Nuclear and
Chief Nuclear Officer
Tennessee Valley Authority
6A Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT
IMPACT FOR AN EXEMPTION FROM APPENDIX J TO 10 CFR PART 50
SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT UNIT 1 (TAC NO. M90876)

Dear Mr. Kingsley:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for a scheduler exemption from the periodic testing frequency requirements of 10 CFR 50, Appendix J, Section III.D.3 for the Sequoyah Nuclear plant, Unit 1. The application was submitted by letter dated November 10, 1994, and pertains to the Appendix J requirement that the Primary Containment local leak rate tests that are performed during each refueling outage must be performed at intervals no greater than 2 years. The exemption is needed for certain Type C tests to allow operation of Unit 1 past the two-year interval so that the tests can be performed during the Cycle 7 refueling outage.

The environmental assessment has been forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

David E. LaBarge, Sr. Project Manager
Project Directorate II-4
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-327
Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure: Heinz Muller, EPA
See next page

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December 2, 1994

DOCKET NO. 50-327

MEMORANDUM TO: Rules Review and Directives Branch
 Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services
 Office of Administration

FROM: Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT
 IMPACT FOR AN EXEMPTION FROM APPENDIX J TO 10 CFR PART 50
 SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT UNIT 1 (TAC NO. M90876)

One signed original of the *Federal Register* Notice identified below is attached for your transmittal to the Office of the Federal Register for publication. Additional conformed copies (5) of the Notice are enclosed for your use.

- Notice of Receipt of Application for Construction Permit(s) and Operating License(s).
- Notice of Receipt of Partial Application for Construction Permit(s) and Facility License(s): Time for submission of Views on Antitrust matters.
- Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License. (Call with 30-day insert date).
- Notice of Receipt of Application for Facility License(s); Notice of Availability of Applicant's Environmental Report; and Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Facility License(s) and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing.
- Notice of Availability of NRC Draft/Final Environmental Statement.
- Notice of Limited Work Authorization.
- Notice of Availability of Safety Evaluation Report.
- Notice of Issuance of Construction Permit(s).
- Notice of Issuance of Facility Operating License(s) or Amendment(s).
- Order.
- Exemption.
- Notice of Granting Exemption.
- Environmental Assessment.
- Notice of Preparation of Environmental Assessment.
- Receipt of Petition for Director's Decision Under 10 CFR 2.206.
- Issuance of Final Director's Decision Under 10 CFR 2.206.
- Other: _____

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Project Directorate II-4

Attachment(s): As stated

Contact: B. Clayton
Telephone: 504-3475

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 1

DOCKET NO. 50-327

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from the requirements of Section III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50 to the Tennessee Valley Authority, licensee for the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant (SQN), Unit 1. The plant is located at the licensee's site in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the provisions in Section III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50 with respect to the requirement to perform Primary Containment Type C local leak rate tests (LLRTs) at intervals no greater than 2 years. The exemption would affect Unit 1 only and allow certain Type C valve penetration LLRTs that are specified in the submittal (126 valves out of a total of 242 valves subject to the LLRT program) to be delayed until the Cycle 7 refueling outage. This outage is scheduled to start approximately 5 months after the expiration date of the earliest Type C test.

On March 2, 1993, SQN Unit 1 entered a forced outage and started the Cycle 6 refueling outage. All Type B and Type C LLRTs were performed during the outage, which ended in December 1993. The unit returned to service on April 20, 1994. Due to the length of the outage, a number of LLRTs that were performed early in the outage were retested prior to conducting the containment integrated leak rate test (CILRT) in December 1993. LLRTs of valves that were initially tested between April 3 and July 19, 1993, however, were not retested because of schedule restraints associated with the CILRT. Since the 2 year time interval for the Type C valve penetrations that were not retested will expire starting in April 1995, Unit 1 would be forced to shut down at that time to perform the tests unless a schedular exemption is granted. The next Unit 1 refueling outage is scheduled to start in September 1995. Therefore, the licensee has proposed an exemption to allow a one-time deferment of the Appendix J interval requirement for the affected Type C valve penetration tests from April 3, 1995, until October 1, 1995, a total of approximately 181 days from the first valve tested during the Cycle 6 outage.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated November 10, 1994.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is required to exempt the licensee from the requirement to conduct certain specified Type C containment local leak rate tests on SQN Unit 1 at a 2-year frequency so the tests can be performed during the Cycle 7 refueling outage scheduled to start in September 1995. However, TVA has requested extension of the time interval to October 1, 1995, to account for unforeseen circumstances.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

With respect to the requested action, exemption from the above requirement would allow the licensee to delay conducting certain Type C local leak rate tests at Unit 1 approximately 181 days beyond the scheduled expiration date of the 2-year period for the first LLRT performed during the Cycle 6 outage. This relatively small increase in the test interval does not significantly contribute to the total leakage limits. The intent of Section III.D.3 of Appendix J is to ensure that containment leakage is maintained within the prescribed limits. Based on the following information, the exemption will not significantly affect the ability of the individual primary containment valves that are subject to the Type C tests to perform this safety function:

1. The valves for which the extension of the 2-year interval is being requested have a history of being leak tight and in good condition. The leak-tight condition of these components was last verified by Type C LLRTs and by the Type A test conducted in December 1993. Based on the present containment leak rate that accounts for less than 93 percent of the 0.75 La limit, the remaining margin is sufficient to ensure any incremental increase in leakage resulting from the extension would not cause unacceptable as-found test results.

2. Based on historical data, any incremental increase in leakage because of the extension will be small. Improved maintenance practices implemented during the Unit 1 Cycle 5 outage and continued into the Cycle 6 outage, including motor operated valve testing (MOVATS) of containment isolation valves, provide increased assurance that these components will perform their safety function.

3. The valves for which the exemption is requested were included in the Type A test performed in December 1993. This test indicated a containment leak rate of 0.1742 percent per day, which is below the 0.1875 percent per day limit.

The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents 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 environmental impacts, the proposed action does involve features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impacts. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded that there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed exemption, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative would be to deny the request. Such action would not enhance the protection of the environment and would result in unjustified cost to the licensee.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2," dated February 21, 1974.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The NRC staff consulted with the Tennessee State official regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based on 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 November 10, 1994, 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 Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library, 1101 Broad Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 2nd day of December 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


Frederick J. Heddon, Director
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Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Mr. Oliver D. Kingsley, Jr.
Tennessee Valley Authority

SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT

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