

May 2, 1989

Docket No 50-341

Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia
Senior Vice President
Nuclear Operations
Detroit Edison Company
6400 North Dixie Highway
Newport, Michigan 48166

Dear Mr. Sylvia:

SUBJECT: PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT TO OPERATING LICENSE FOR
FERMI-2 (TAC NO. 72998)

The Commission has forwarded the enclosed announcement to the Monroe Evening News for publication. This announcement relates to your application dated April 28, 1989, for an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-20 to change the Technical Specifications by modifying the required Action when one of two redundant vacuum breaker position indicators is inoperable.

original signed by

John Stang, Project Manager
Project Directorate III-1
Division of Reactor Projects - III,
IV, V, & Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Newspaper Announcement

cc: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Stang".

John Stang, Project Manager
Project Directorate III-1
Division of Reactor Projects - III,
IV, V, & Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Newspaper Announcement

cc: See next page

Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia
Detroit Edison Company

Fermi-2 Facility

cc:

Mr. Ronald C. Callen
Adv. Planning Review Section
Michigan Public Service Commission
6545 Mercantile Way
P. O. Box 30221
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Ms. Lynn Goodman
Supervisor - Licensing
Detroit Edison Company
Fermi Unit 2
6400 North Dixie Highway
Newport, Michigan 48166

John Flynn, Esq.
Senior Attorney
Detroit Edison Company
2000 Second Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Nuclear Facilities and Environmental
Monitoring Section Office
Division of Radiological Health
P. O. Box 30035
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Mr. Thomas Randazzo
Director, Regulatory Affairs
Detroit Edison Company
Fermi Unit 2
6400 North Dixie Highway
Newport, Michigan 48166

Mr. Walt Rogers
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Resident Inspector's Office
6450 W. Dixie Highway
Newport, Michigan 48166

Monroe County Office of Civil
Preparedness
963 South Raisinville
Monroe, Michigan 48161

Regional Administrator, Region III
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

PUBLIC NOTICE
NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO AMEND OPERATING LICENSE AT
FERMI-2

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has received an application dated April 28, 1989, from the Detroit Edison Company (licensee) and Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative for an exigent amendment to the operating license for Fermi-2, located in Monroe County, Michigan.

If approved, the amendment would modify the Technical Specifications 3/4.6.4.1 to change the required ACTION statement when one of two redundant vacuum breaker position indicators is inoperable.

The Commission has determined that the licensee used its best efforts to make a timely application for the proposed change and that exigent circumstances do exist and were not the result of any fault of the licensee. The exigent circumstances result from the fact that one position indicator for suppression chamber-to-drywell vacuum breaker, T23-400F was discovered on April 26, 1989, to be inoperable. With one position indicator on a vacuum breaker inoperable the Technical Specifications for Fermi-2 require that associated vacuum breaker and all other vacuum breakers be closed within 2 hours. In addition, the licensee has 14 days to restore the position indicator to operable or verify the vacuum breaker with the inoperable position indicator to be closed by conducting a test which demonstrates that the drywell to suppression chamber differential pressure is maintained at greater than or equal to 0.5 psi for one hour without makeup within 24 hours, and at least once per 15 days, thereafter.

Upon discovery of the inoperable indication, the licensee began troubleshooting activities on the inoperable indicator and complied with the provisions to verify the closure of all vacuum breakers within 2 hours. Also, planning for the completion of the subsequent required test for vacuum closure was begun in the event that the troubleshooting effort was unsuccessful.

The undesirability of the use of the test method for verification of vacuum breaker closure then became evident. The licensee believes that performance of the test when it is not necessary leads to unnecessary challenges to plant safety systems and unnecessary environmental impact. These circumstances arose from an unexpected plant event and, therefore, could not have been reasonably foreseen. Subsequently, it has been determined that the plant must be placed in COLD SHUTDOWN to repair inoperable position indicator.

Based on the above, the NRC staff finds that exigent circumstances do exist and the licensee has acted in a timely manner.

The proposed IS revision changes the ACTION statement concerning operability of position indicators for vacuum breakers to allow use of the remaining operable position indicator to determine the vacuum breaker position every 14 days instead of having the only option requiring the specified test every 15 days. The test requirements would be reserved for cases where verifying the redundant position indicator is impractical (i.e., the vacuum breaker cannot be opened).

Following an initial review of this application, the requested amendment has been evaluated against the standards in 10 CFR 50.92 and the NRC staff has made a proposed (preliminary) determination that the requested amendment involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission has provided standards for determining whether a significant hazards consideration exists [10 CFR 50.92(c)] for a proposed amendment to a

facility operating license. A proposed amendment to an operating license for a facility involves no significant hazards consideration if 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.

(1) The proposed changes do not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. The intent of the TS ACTION statement is not changed because the position of the vacuum breaker will still be determined on an accelerated bases. In addition the vulnerability of placing the plant in a transient condition has been reduced. The proposed changes also prevent the routine (every 15 days when complying with the existing TS) release of gaseous effluents in order to return to normal primary containment pressure.

(2) The proposed changes do not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated. The proposed amendment does not introduce new modes of plant operation nor involve a physical modification to the plant. The method of verifying that the vacuum breaker is closed is consistent with the existing TS surveillance requirement 4.6.4.1.b.2. The two position indicator circuits on each valve are divisional such that an inoperable circuit will not affect the OPERABLE circuit.

(3) The proposed changes do not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety. The proposed amendment reduces the probability of placing the plant into a transient condition, reduces the number of gaseous effluent releases, and maintains the intent of the TS. The proposed change will reduce

the probability of placing the plant into a transient condition by not requiring a pressure test that verifies a vacuum breaker is closed, when an OPERABLE position indicator is indicating the vacuum breaker is closed. The proposed amendment will reduce the number of gaseous effluent releases that are required subsequent to performing the subject pressure test by reducing the situation when this off-normal test is performed.

The proposed amendment does not change the intent of the ACTION statement in the TS, because the proposed changes continue to require that the vacuum breaker be verified closed at the same frequency. The proposed verification method is consistent with the existing surveillance requirements and will be performed at twice the normal surveillance frequency.

If the proposed determination that the requested license amendment involves no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the staff will issue the amendment without first offering an opportunity for a public hearing. An opportunity for a hearing will be published in the Federal Register at a later date and any hearing request will not delay the effective date of the amendment.

If the staff decides in its final determination that the amendment does involve a significant hazards consideration, a notice of opportunity for a prior hearing will be published in the Federal Register and, if a hearing is granted, it will be held before the amendment is issued.

Comments on the proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration may be telephoned to Lawrence Yandell, Acting Director of Project Directorate III-1, by collect call to 1-301-492-4553, or submitted in writing to the Rules and Procedures Branch, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. All comments received by

May 9, 1989 will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined at the NRC's Local Public Document Room located at the Monroe County Library System, 3700 South Custer Road, Monroe, Michigan 48161, and at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20555.