

December 28, 1998

Mr. J. A. Scalice  
Chief Nuclear Officer and  
Executive Vice President  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
6A Lookout Place  
1101 Market Street  
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402-2801

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT FOR WATTS  
BAR NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 1 (TAC NO. MA4423 )

Dear Mr. Scalice:

The Commission has forwarded a "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for Hearing" to the Office of Federal Register for publication. A copy is enclosed for your information.

This notice relates to your application dated December 22 and revision dated December 23, 1998, to amend the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant, Unit 1, operating license to allow a change to the plant Technical Requirements Manual.

Sincerely,

/s/

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

Docket No. 50-390

Enclosure: Notice of Consideration of  
Issuance of Amendment

cc w/encls: 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 cursive script that reads "Robert E. Martin".

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

Docket No. 50-390

Enclosure: Notice of Consideration of  
Issuance of Amendment

cc w/encls: See next page

Mr. J. A. Scalice  
Tennessee Valley Authority

cc:

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Nuclear Operations  
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## WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT

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Spring City, TN 37381

Mr. William R. Lagergren, Plant Manager  
Watts Bar Nuclear Plant  
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Spring City, TN 37381

Regional Administrator  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Region II  
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Senior Resident Inspector  
Watts Bar Nuclear Plant  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
1260 Nuclear Plant Road  
Spring City, TN 37381

County Executive  
Rhea County Courthouse  
Dayton, TN 37321

County Executive  
Meigs County Courthouse  
Decatur, TN 37322

Mr. Michael H. Mobley, Director  
TN Dept. of Environment & Conservation  
Division of Radiological Health  
3rd Floor, L and C Annex  
401 Church Street  
Nashville, TN 37243-1532

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONTENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITYDOCKET NO. 50-390NOTICE 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-90 issued to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA or the licensee) for operation of the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant, Unit 1(WBN), located in Rhea County, Tennessee.

The proposed amendment would change the Technical Requirement Manual (TRM) for WBN to prevent a potential shutdown of the unit. The change is in response to sporadic grounds which have been encountered on an annunciator circuit that is used to confirm operability of the ice condenser containment lower inlet door position monitoring system. The proposed license amendment would temporarily revise the TRM Bases for Technical Surveillance Requirement (TSR) 3.6.2.1 (Channel Check - Ice Condenser Lower Inlet Door Position Monitoring System) to provide a temporary, optional method of satisfying the requirements for the channel check. This method would be allowed until the next WBN plant entry into plant operating Mode 3, currently planned in late February 1999, for the next refueling outage.

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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:

- A. The proposed amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The lower inlet doors have been verified to be closed by confirming the lights on the door position monitoring system panel in the control room. The annunciator circuit which is currently impacted by an identified cable ground is not in the required portion of the system. This annunciator provides no safety function. Further, the Inlet Door Position Monitoring System is not required for proper operation of the inlet doors. Therefore, by verifying the green lights are indicating and the red lights are not indicating on a 12-hour frequency provides reasonable assurance the door monitoring system is performing its required function and that the ice condenser system remains operable with no negative effects from an opened door(s). Accordingly, the change does not increase the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

- B. The proposed amendment does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

The ice condenser lower inlet doors and ice bed are passive features and do not have the potential of creating an accident. This change retains a reasonable method of ensuring door position is known. Accordingly, there are no mechanisms that could create an accident of a different type.

- C. The proposed amendment does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

This TRM bases change provides a reasonable alternative method of ensuring the door position monitoring system is operable. The door position monitoring system itself is not assumed to actuate in any way during the course of postulated plant events. Any problems with door positions would be noted well before it could have any impact on ice bed performance. Accordingly, no Technical Specification is impacted and 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 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 February 1, 1999, 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 Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library, 1001 Broad Street, Chattanooga, TN 37042. 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 20555-0001, 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 General Counsel, Tennessee Valley Authority, ET 10H, 400 East Summit Hill Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902, 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 December 22 and revision dated December 23, 1998, 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, 1001 Broad Street, Chattanooga, TN 37042.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of December 1998.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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