

April 18, 1997

Ms. Irene Johnson, Acting Manager
Nuclear Regulatory Services
Commonwealth Edison Company
Executive Towers West III
1400 Opus Place, Suite 500
Downers Grove, IL 60515

SUBJECT: PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENTS TO FACILITY OPERATING
LICENSES FOR DRESDEN, UNITS 2 AND 3 (TAC NOS. M98389 AND M98390)

Dear Ms. Johnson:

The enclosed announcement has been forwarded to the Joliet News Herald for publication. This amendment relates to your request dated April 14, 1997, as supplemented on April 17, 1997, for an exigent Technical Specification (TS) amendment to (1) evaluate an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) involving the potential dose a control room operator may receive following a design basis accident (DBA), resulting from an error in the secondary containment volume value, (2) a change in Technical Specification (TS) 4.7.P.2.b and 4.7.P.3 values for the allowed methyl iodide penetration for the standby gas treatment (SBGT) charcoal adsorbers, and (3) change of TS 5.2.C to reflect the new calculated free volume value of the secondary containment.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

John F. Stang, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate III-2
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

220023

Docket Nos. 50-237, 50-249

Enclosure: Newspaper Announcement

cc w/encl: see next page

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Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

John F. Stang, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate III-2
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 18, 1997

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Commonwealth Edison Company
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Stang".

John F. Stang, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate III-2
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-237, 50-249

Enclosure: Newspaper Announcement

cc w/encl: see next page

I. Johnson
Commonwealth Edison Company

Dresden Nuclear Power Station
Unit Nos. 2 and 3

cc:

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PUBLIC NOTICE
NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO AMEND OPERATING LICENSE FOR
DRESDEN NUCLEAR POWER STATION, UNITS 2 AND 3

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has received an application dated April 14, 1997, as supplemented April 17, 1997, from Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd, the licensee) to amend Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-19 and DPR-25 for the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Units 2 and 3, located in Grundy County, Illinois.

The proposed amendments would: (1) evaluate an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) involving the potential dose a control room operator may receive following a design basis accident (DBA), resulting from an error in the secondary containment volume value, (2) a change in Technical Specification (TS) Surveillance Requirements (SR) 4.7.P.2.b and 4.7.P.3 values for the allowed methyl iodide penetration for the standby gas treatment (SBGT) charcoal adsorbers, and (3) a change to TS 5.2.C to reflect the new calculated free volume value of the secondary containment.

The April 14, 1997, application requested that these amendments be processed on an emergency basis. By letter dated April 17, 1997, the licensee changed the request from emergency to exigent. The exigency exists in that failure of the Commission to act in a timely manor would result in the prevention of the resumption of operation of Dresden, Units 2 and 3. Dresden, Unit 2, shut down on April 11, 1997, because of equipment problems and expects to resume power operations on April 30, 1997. Dresden, Unit 3, is currently in a refueling outage and expects to resume power operation on June 6, 1997. Dresden, Units 2 and 3, share joint TSs and to allow Unit 2 to restart, the Commission will issue the TSs for both, Units 2 and 3.

The licensee was unable to make a more timely application because of the recent discovery of an error (December 1996) associated with the secondary

containment volume value. Following a telephone conversation with the NRC staff on March 24, 1997, the licensee performed a 10 CFR 50.59 evaluation and discovered the error in the secondary containment volume value resulted in a USQ. In accordance with the NRC Inspection Manual Chapter 9900, the licensee made the decision that resumption of operation of Dresden, Units 2 and 3, could not take place until the resolution of the USQ by the NRC staff. Therefore, the exigent situation occurred without prior indication and could not have been avoided.

The NRC has determined that the licensee used its best efforts to make a timely application for the proposed changes and that exigent circumstances do exist and were not the result of any intentional delay on the part of the licensee.

The units can not restart until the proposed amendments have been approved by the NRC.

Following an initial review of this application against the standards in 10 CFR 50.92, the NRC staff has made a proposed (preliminary) determination that the amendments requested involve no significant hazards consideration. According to 10 CFR 50.92(c), this means that the proposed amendments would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated, would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated, or involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. The licensee's analysis of the no significant hazards consideration is presented below.

- 1) Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated because of the following:

The consequences of previously analyzed accidents are not significantly affected by this proposed License Amendment. It was determined that the only impact of the secondary containment free volume discrepancy is a small increase in Control Room operator dose. By decreasing the allowed methyl iodide penetration for SBTG system charcoal from 10% to 2.5%, calculated operator dose levels remain within GDC 19 limits. Other consequences of the reduced secondary containment volume do not increase the consequences of an accident previously analyzed.

The proposed change to the SBTG system charcoal results in a net reduction in the consequences of a postulated accident by improving the removal of iodines from releases via the SBTG. The proposed change to the Design Features description of the secondary containment volume is administrative in nature and only affects descriptive information. Therefore, the specific changes do not result in an increase in the consequences of a previously analyzed accident.

The proposed License Amendment will not result in the reactor operating in a different condition such which could adversely affect the initial conditions assumed in any design basis accident analysis.

The systems affected by this amendment are not postulated as initiators for any accident sequence at Dresden Station; and therefore, the probability of an accident previously evaluated is not affected by the proposed amendment.

- 2) Create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated because:

The proposed license amendment does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident previously evaluated for Dresden Station. No new modes of operation are introduced by the proposed changes. This change merely increases the SBTG efficiency when tested in accordance with industry standards. This increase in SBTG charcoal efficiency is required [sic] to compensate for the discrepancy in secondary containment free volume. In addition, the proposed change merely corrects the descriptive material in section 5.0, Design Features, such that the more accurate secondary containment free volume is provided. Based on this, the proposed changes do not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident.

- 3) Involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety because:

The proposed license amendment does not significantly affect existing plant safety margins or the reliability of the equipment assumed to operate in the safety analysis. The proposed changes

ensure that Control Room operator dose levels remain below GDC 19 limits considering the impact of the secondary containment free volume discrepancy. In addition, the proposed license amendment for Dresden Station will not reduce or otherwise affect the availability or capability of systems required to mitigate accident conditions. As described in the bases for the change, the secondary containment free volume is not utilized as an input parameter to calculations utilized to demonstrate compliance with off-site dose limits. Other secondary containment functions have been evaluated and demonstrated to remain unaffected by the reduced secondary containment volume. Therefore, the proposed changes do not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety.

If the proposed determination that the requested license amendments involve no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the NRC will issue the amendments 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 amendments.

If the NRC decides in its final determination that the amendments do 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 amendments are issued.

Comments on the proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration may be telephoned to Robert Capra, Director, Project Directorate III-2, by collect call to 1-301-415-1395. Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D22, 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, N.W., Washington, DC. All comments received by 4:15 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on April 29, 1997, 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 in the Morris Area Public Library District, 604 Liberty Street, Morris, Illinois 60450, and at the Commission's Public Document Room.