

December 15, 1987

Docket No. 50-498

Mr. J. H. Goldberg
Group Vice - President, Nuclear
Houston Lighting and Power Company
P. O. Box 1700
Houston, Texas 77001

Dear Mr. Goldberg:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT
HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION - SOUTH TEXAS
PROJECT, UNIT 1

Enclosed is a copy of the "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License and Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination." This notice relates to your application for amendment dated November 12, 1987 and supplemented on December 9, 1987, relating to increasing the allowable response times for overtemperature delta-T and overpower delta-T instrumentation from 6.5 seconds to 8.0 seconds.

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

Sincerely,

—S—

N. Prasad Kadambi, Project Manager
Project Directorate - IV
Division of Reactor Projects - III,
IV, V and Special Projects

Enclosure:
As stated

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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[Handwritten signature and date 12/15/87]

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Mr. J. H. Goldberg
Houston Lighting and Power Company

South Texas Project

cc:

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Houston Lighting & Power Company - 2 - South Texas Project

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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Mr. J. H. Goldberg
Houston Lighting and Power Company

South Texas Project (other)

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONHOUSTON LIGHTING & POWER COMPANYCITY PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OF SAN ANTONIOCENTRAL POWER AND LIGHT COMPANYCITY OF AUSTIN, TEXASDOCKET NO. 50-498

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS
CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. NPF-71, issued to Houston Lighting & Power Company, et al., (the licensee) for operation of the South Texas Project Unit 1 facility located in Matagorda County, Texas.

The amendment would increase the allowable response times for overtemperature delta-T and overpower delta-T instrumentation from 6.5 seconds to 8.0 seconds. The maximum acceptable response time is given in Table 3.3-2 of the Technical Specifications, NUREG-1255, for South Texas Project Unit 1.

This action is in response to the licensee's application for amendment dated November 12, 1987. Subsequently, on December 9, 1987, the licensee requested that this amendment request be treated as an exigent situation because without the amendment, the start-up of the unit may not be able to proceed. The determination of whether or not the time response represents a constraint on start-up cannot be made until tests scheduled for December 18,

1987 are completed. The licensee has stated that startup and operation at higher power levels will be delayed if the technical specification amendment is needed but not implemented in time. The staff concurs with the need to expedite the amendment process for the following reason:

The staff has examined the schedule for activities between initial criticality and commercial operation and finds that it provides for a methodical and safe power ascension program. It incorporates hold points to conduct tests and provides for NRC staff assessments. Attempts to compress the activities into a shorter period of time would compromise safe power operation. Accordingly, the staff concludes that delay in initial criticality is likely to result in a delay in eventual power operation of the facility and involves an emergency that could result in delay in start of power production. Since the amendment does not involve a significant hazards consideration, the usual 30-day notice period is being reduced to 15 days.

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.

Resistance temperature detectors (RTDs) provide measurement of reactor coolant temperatures which are processed electronically and used in the

reactor trip system. The licensee has performed analysis to determine the effect of increasing the response time from 6.5 seconds to 8 seconds. The analyses have considered the following accident scenarios shown below with the FSAR section which contains the description: 15.6.5 - Large Break LOCA; 15.6.5 - Small Break LOCA; 15.4.8 - Rod Ejection Long Term Mass; 6.2 - Containment Subcompartment and Long Term Mass and Energy Release; 15.6.3 - Steam Generator Tube Rupture; 3.6 - Blowdown Reactor Vessel and Loop Forces; 15.6.5 - Post-LOCA Long-Term Core Cooling; 6.3.2.5 - Hot Leg Switchover to Prevent Potential Boron Precipitation; 13.5.2 - Emergency Response Guidelines; 15.4.2 - Uncontrolled RCCA Bank Withdrawal at Power; 15.2.3 - Loss of Load/Turbine Trip; 15.6.1 - Inadvertent opening of a Pressurizer Safety or Relief Valve Event; 15.4.6 - Uncontrolled Boron Dilution at Power; 15.1.5- Steamline Rupture at Power.

The NRC staff has evaluated the results of the above analyses and concluded that the performance of the reactor trip system would be acceptable with a RTD response time of 8.0 seconds. Based on this assessment, the requested change will not:

- (1) Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated because all the computed consequences meet the same acceptance criteria used in the previous review. As a result, the trip system would function in such a way as to maintain the required temperatures and pressures.
- (2) Create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated because the Technical Specifications currently in force already incorporates a major part of the time delay of 8.0 seconds.

In addition, the licensee has stated that no physical modifications are involved in making this change.

- (3) Involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety because the analyses show that there is minimal impact on the consequences of design basis accidents.

Accordingly, the Commission proposes to determine that this change does not involve significant hazards considerations.

If the proposed determination becomes final, 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 Commission 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 any amendment is issued.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration. Comments on the proposed determination may be telephoned to Jose A. Calvo, Director, Project Directorate - IV, by collect call to (301) 492-7460, or submitted in writing to the Rules and Procedures Branch, Division of Rules and Records, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 4000, Maryland National Bank Building, 7735 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, Maryland from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All comments received by January 05, 1988 will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., and at the

Local Public Document Room, Wharton County Junior College, J. M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, Texas 77488 and in the Austin Public Library, 810 Guadalupe Street, Austin, Texas 78701.

Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this 15th day of December, 1987.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Jose A. Calvo

Jose A. Calvo, Director
Project Directorate - IV
Division of Reactor Projects - III,
IV, V and Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation