

March 3, 1994

Docket Nos. 50-498
and 50-499

Mr. William T. Cottle
Group Vice President, Nuclear
Houston Lighting & Power Company
South Texas Project Electric Generating Station
Post Office Box 289
Wadsworth, Texas 77483

Dear Mr. Cottle:

SUBJECT: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2 - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (TAC NOS. M88445 AND M88446)

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" for your information. This assessment relates to your letter dated December 17, 1993, as supplemented by letter dated January 14, 1994, requesting a one-time exemption from the twenty-four month requalification cycle limit required by 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (c)(1).

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

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Lawrence E. Kokajko, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosures:
See next page

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Mr. William T. Cottle

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cc w/enclosure:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONHOUSTON LIGHTING & POWER COMPANYCITY PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OF SAN ANTONIOCENTRAL POWER AND LIGHT COMPANYCITY OF AUSTIN, TEXASSOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2DOCKET NOS. 50-498 AND 50-499ENVIRONMENTAL 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 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (c)(1) in response to a request filed by the Houston Lighting & Power Company, et al. (the licensee), for the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2, located in Matagorda County, Texas.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action:

The proposed exemption would allow the licensee to exceed the allowable time limit of twenty-four continuous months for each operator to successfully complete a requalification program as stated in 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (c)(1). The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's request for exemption dated December 17, 1993, and supplemented by letter dated January 14, 1994.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The exemption is requested on a one-time only basis to support the current requalification cycle that started on April 13, 1992. In January 1994, South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2 (STP) began a six-operating crew, six-week requalification training plan. This change will cause the current

requalification cycle to continue until April 22, 1994, which exceeds the twenty-four month limit stated in 10 CFR 55.59.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed exemption. The proposed exemption would allow STP to complete the current requalification cycle on April 22, 1994, an extension of ten days. This is a result of STP changing from five to six crews, as an enhancement to the operational staff. The increase was made to help maintain individual workloads at a reasonable level, to reduce the need for routine overtime, and to allow for continued, uninterrupted training. There will be no changes to the facility or the environment as a result of the exemption. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed changes do not affect nonradiological effluents and have no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternative to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action, any alternative will have either no significantly different environmental impact or will have greater environmental impact. The principal alternative would be to deny the requested exemption. This would not reduce environmental impacts as a result of plant operation.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2, dated August 1986.

Agencies and Persons Contacted:

The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's request. The staff consulted with the State of Texas regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, we conclude that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the request for exemption dated December 17, 1993, as supplemented by letter dated January 14, 1994, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, Lower Level, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20555 and at the Wharton County Junior College, J.M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, Texas 77488.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 3rd day of March 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

William D. Reckley

William D. Reckley, Acting Director
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation