

August 23, 1995

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

Distribution  
Docket File LOCAL  
PDIV-4 r/f JRoe  
TAlexion PNoonan  
OGC ACRS (4)  
JDyer, RIV CBerlinger

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT RELATED TO A REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION III.D.3 OF APPENDIX J TO 10 CFR PART 50, SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (STP) (TAC NOS. M92515 AND M92516)

Dear Mr. Cottle:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for exemption dated May 25, 1995. The proposed exemption would allow the performance of the required periodic Type C tests during power operation.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Thomas W. Alexion, Project Manager  
Project Directorate IV-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 499

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Document Name: STP92515.ENV

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NAME	<i>PNoonan</i>	<i>TAlexion</i>	<i>CBerlinger</i>	<i>CMarco</i>
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*signed by  
TWA on  
8/23/95*

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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 "Thomas W. Alexion".

Thomas W. Alexion, Project Manager  
Project Directorate IV-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 499

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. William T. Cottle  
Houston Lighting & Power Company

South Texas, Units 1 & 2

cc:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
HOUSTON LIGHTING & POWER COMPANY  
CITY PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OF SAN ANTONIO  
CENTRAL POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY  
CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS  
DOCKET NOS. 50-498 AND 50-499  
SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF  
NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from the Commission's regulations at 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J to Houston Lighting & Power Company (HL&P) acting on behalf of itself and for the City Public Service Board of San Antonio (CPS), Central Power and Light Company (CPL), and City of Austin, Texas (COA) (the licensees), for operation of the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2, located in Matagorda County, Texas.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would grant an exemption from a requirement of Section III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50, which requires that Type C tests shall be performed during each reactor shutdown for refueling but in no case at intervals greater than 2 years. This exemption would allow the licensee to perform the required Type C tests while the plant is at power.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated May 25, 1995.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

Section III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50 states that Type C tests shall be performed during each reactor shutdown for refueling but in no case at intervals greater than 2 years. However, the licensee states that during shutdown, resources are at a premium. The licensee, therefore, desires the option to perform Type C testing at times other than during shutdown. The proposed exemption would allow the option to perform Type C testing at power. Minimal safety benefit would be realized by only performing the Type C tests during each reactor shutdown for refueling because the conditions of the testing are the same regardless of when it is performed. Without this exemption, the licensee would not be allowed to reduce an unintentional regulatory burden that has minimal impact on safety.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the exemption would not significantly increase the probability or amount of expected containment leakage, and that containment integrity would thus be maintained.

The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the

Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does involve features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

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

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on July 5, 1995, the staff consulted with the Texas State official, Arthur C. Tate of the Bureau of

Radiation Control, Texas Department of Health, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

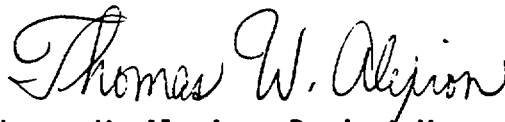
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated May 25, 1995, 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 Wharton County Junior College, J.M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of August 1995.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Thomas W. Alexion, Project Manager  
Project Directorate IV-1  
Division of Reactor Projects  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation