

September 28, 1992

Docket Nos. 50-498
and 50-499

Mr. Donald P. Hall
Group-Vice President, Nuclear
Houston Lighting and Power Company
P. O. Box 1700
Houston, Texas 77251

Dear Mr. Hall:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS - SOUTH TEXAS
PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. M81548 AND M81549)

The Commission has requested the Office of the Federal Register to publish the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for a Hearing." This notice relates to your application for amendments dated June 2, 1992, (superseded original application of August 30, 1991, published in the Federal Register on October 16, 1991) which requested a change to the technical specifications to support the replacement of the two original toxic gas monitoring channels in each unit with three state-of-the art toxic gas monitoring channels. The June 2, 1992, submittal requests approval of an interim technical specification which would apply to the changes being made during the current Unit 1 refueling outage and a final technical specification which would become effective following the next Unit 2 refueling outage (spring 1993).

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

George F. Dick, Jr., Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Notice

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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cc w/enclosure:

Mr. J. Tapia
Senior Resident Inspector
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
P. O. Box 910
Bay City, Texas 77414

Mr. J. C. Lanier/M. B. Lee
City of Austin
Electric Utility Department
P. O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

Mr. K. J. Fiedler
Mr. M. T. Hardt
City Public Service Board
P. O. Box 1771
San Antonio, Texas 78296

Mr. D. E. Ward
Mr. T. M. Puckett
Central Power and Light Company
P. O. Box 2121
Corpus Christi, Texas 78403

INPO
Records Center
1100 Circle 75 Parkway
Atlanta, Georgia 30339-3064

Regional Administrator, Region IV
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, Texas 76011

Mr. Joseph M. Hendrie
50 Bellport Lane
Bellport, New York 11713

Judge, Matagorda County
Matagorda County Courthouse
1700 Seventh Street
Bay City, Texas 77414

Mr. William J. Jump
Manager, Nuclear Licensing
Houston Lighting and Power Company
P. O. Box 289
Wadsworth, Texas 77483

Jack R. Newman, Esq.
Newman & Holtzinger, P.C.
1615 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Licensing Representative
Houston Lighting and Power Company
Suite 610
Three Metro Center
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Bureau of Radiation Control
State of Texas
1101 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

Rufus S. Scott
Associate General Counsel
Houston Lighting and Power Company
P. O. Box 61867
Houston, Texas 77208

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

HOUSTON LIGHTING AND 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

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES, 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 Nos. NPF-76 and NPF-80 issued to Houston Lighting & Power Company, et al., (the licensee) for operation of the South Texas Project, located in Matagorda County, Texas. The original application dated August 30, 1991, was previously published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on October 16, 1991 (56 FR 51926). That application was superseded in its entirety by application dated June 2, 1992.

The proposed amendments would change the technical specifications to reflect a change in the actuation logic which would accompany the replacement of the two original toxic gas monitoring channels with three state-of-the-art toxic gas monitoring channels. The actuation logic would be revised to provide a two-out-of-three (2/3) logic for a high toxic gas actuation signal and monitor failure actuation logic, as opposed to the current one-out-of-two (1/2) and two-out-of-two (2/2) logic respectively. In the June 2, 1992, submittal, the licensee requested approval of an interim technical specification in September 1992 followed by a final technical specification to

be effective in February 1993. This would allow adequate time for hardware and procedural changes to support installation of the third toxic gas monitoring channel during the Unit 1 refueling outage (fall 1992) and Unit 2 refueling outage (spring 1993).

Before issuance of the proposed license amendments, 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:

(1) The proposed change does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The addition of a third channel of toxic gas monitoring would not increase the probability of a previously evaluated accident because the toxic gas analyzers have no role in the initiation of an accident. Consequences of a previously evaluated accident would not increase because a third monitor would provide additional redundancy and reliability to the current monitoring system. Therefore, a more credible toxic gas monitoring system would be in

place, and the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated would not be significantly increased.

(2) The proposed change does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated.

The proposed change would not require the toxic gas monitoring system to perform any safety function for which it is not already designed or required to perform. Adding a third analyzer to the monitoring system for each Unit would provide additional redundancy in the detection of toxic gas release. For these reasons, the proposed change would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated.

(3) The proposed change does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The decrease in probability of actuation when required for the high toxic gas actuation signal and increase in probability of spurious actuation for the loss of power/malfunction actuation signal are slight and do not involve a 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 thirty (30) days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination. The Commission will not normally make a final determination unless it receives a request for a hearing.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Rules and Directives Review Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room P-223, Phillips Building, 7920 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, 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 20555. The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By November 2, 1992, 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 20555 and at the local public document room located at Wharton County Junior College, J. M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, Texas 77488. 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, 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 fifteen (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 fifteen (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.

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.

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, Attention: Docketing and Services Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20555, by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last ten (10) days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1-(800) 325-6000 (in Missouri 1-(800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number N1023 and the following message addressed to Suzanne C. Black: petitioner's name and telephone number, date petition was mailed, plant name, and publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S.

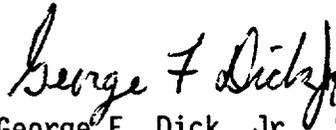
Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, and to Jack R. Newman, Esq., Newman & Holtzinger, P. C., 1615 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, attorney for the licensee.

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 amendments dated June 2, 1992, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20555 and at the local public document room located at Wharton County Junior College, J. M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, Texas 77488.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 28th day of September 1992.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



George F. Dick, Jr., Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation