

March 18, 1999

Mr. Harold B. Ray
Executive Vice President
Southern California Edison Company
San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
P.O. Box 128
San Clemente, California 92674-0128

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 2 AND 3 (TAC NOS. MA4485 AND MA4486)

Dear Mr. Ray:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) of the Commission's regulations dated December 18, 1998. Under the proposed exemption, the licensee would submit revisions to the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) to the NRC within 6 months after completion of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Unit 3 refueling outage, but not less frequently than every 24 months. In addition, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.59(b)(2), reports containing a brief description of changes, tests, and experiments, including associated safety evaluation summaries, will be submitted at the same time as revisions to the UFSAR.

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

Sincerely,
Original signed by
James W. Clifford, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-361
and 50-362

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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cc w/encl:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY

SAN DIEGO GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

THE CITY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

THE CITY OF ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA

DOCKET NOS. 50-361 AND 50-362

SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNIT NOS. 2 AND 3

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-10 and NPF-15, issued to Southern California Edison Company (the licensee), for operation of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Units 2 and 3 located in San Diego County, California.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would allow the licensee to submit revisions to the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) to the NRC within 6 months after completion of the SONGS Unit 3 refueling outage, but not less frequently than every 24 months. In addition, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.59(b)(2), reports containing a brief description of changes, tests, and experiments, including associated safety evaluation summaries, will be submitted at the same time as revisions to the UFSAR.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for the exemption dated December 18, 1998.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is needed to address the undue regulatory burden for units that share a common UFSAR regarding the requirements of Section 50.71(e)(4). Section 50.71(e)(4) requires licensees to submit updates to its UFSAR annually or within 6 months after each refueling outage providing that the interval between successive updates does not exceed 24 months. Since SONGS Units 2 and 3 share a common UFSAR, the licensee must update the same document annually or within six months after a refueling outage for either unit. The underlying purpose of the rule was to relieve licensees of the burden of filing annual FSAR revisions while assuring that such revisions are made at least every 24 months.

The Commission reduced the burden, in part, by permitting a licensee to submit its FSAR revisions six months after refueling outages for its facility, but did not provide for multiple unit facilities sharing a common FSAR in the rule. Rather, the Commission stated that "With respect to the concern about multiple facilities sharing a common FSAR, licensees will have maximum flexibility for scheduling updates on a case-by-case basis" (57 FR 39355). Allowing the exemption would maintain the UFSAR current within 24 months of the last revisions. Submission of the 10 CFR 50.59 design change report for either unit together with the UFSAR revision as permitted by 10 CFR 50.59(b)(2), also would not exceed a 24-month interval.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed action is administrative in nature, unrelated to plant operations.

The proposed action 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 occupational exposure or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impacts. Therefore, there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with this action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the "no-action" alternative). Denial of the exemption 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 did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Proposed San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, Units 2 and 3," dated April 1981 (NUREG-0490).

Agencies and Persons Contacted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 15, 1999, the staff consulted with the California State official, Mr. Steve Hsu of the Radiologic Health Branch of the State Department

of Health Services, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of 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 December 18, 1998, 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 Main Library, University of California, P.O. Box 19557, Irvine, California 92713.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of March 1999.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



James W. Clifford, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation