

December 4, 2002

Mr. Dale E. Young, Vice President
Crystal River Nuclear Plant (NA1B)
ATTN: Supervisor, Licensing & Regulatory Programs
15760 W. Power Line Street
Crystal River, Florida 34428-6708

SUBJECT: CRYSTAL RIVER UNIT 3 - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR AN
EXEMPTION FROM 10 CFR 55.59 (TAC NO. MB6747)

Dear Mr. Young:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for exemption dated November 18, 2002. The proposed exemption would allow the licensed operator requalification examinations for Crystal River Unit 3 to be rescheduled. The requested exemption would extend the completion date for the examinations from December 31, 2002, to February 28, 2003.

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

Sincerely,

/RA/

Allen G. Howe, Chief, Section 2
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-302

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

FLORIDA POWER CORPORATION

DOCKET NO. 50-302

CRYSTAL RIVER UNIT 3

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of an exemption from Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 55, Section 55.59(c) for Facility Operating License No. DPR-72, issued to Florida Power Corporation (the licensee), for operation of Crystal River Unit 3 (CR-3), located in Citrus County, Florida. Therefore, as required by 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would constitute a one-time exemption to allow the licensed operator requalification examinations for CR-3 to be rescheduled. The requested exemption would extend the completion date for the examinations from December 31, 2002, to February 28, 2003.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated November 18, 2002.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would extend the current CR-3 requalification program from December 31, 2002, to February 28, 2003. The proposed action is needed to allow for minimal interruption of the licensed personnel operating the plant during a potential labor action.

Specifically, should such a labor action occur, the licensee has stated that CR-3 will be operated by personnel with current NRC licenses not affected by the labor action. The licensee deems it prudent to allow the licensed personnel operating the plant to remain fully available to stand watch on operating crews and not be distracted by completing the licensed operator requalification program by December 31, 2002.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the extension of the operator requalification examinations from December 31, 2002, to February 28, 2002.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

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

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Environmental Impacts of the 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 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:

The action does not involve the use of any different resources than those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for CR-3.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

On November 22, 2002, the staff consulted with the Florida State official, William Passetti of the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Radiation Control, 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 NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC 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 November 18, 2002. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, should contact the NRC PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of December 2002.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
/RA/

Allen G. Howe, Chief, Section 2
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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