UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

November 21, 2008

Mr. William R. Campbell, Jr.
Chief Nuclear Officer and
Executive Vice President
Tennessee Valley Authority
6A Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 - PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE (TAC NOS. ME0103 AND ME0104)

Dear Mr. Campbell:

The enclosed announcement was forwarded to the Chattanooga Times Free Press for publication. This announcement relates to your application dated November 12, 2008, for amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-77 and DPR-79. The proposed amendment would revise Technical Specification (TS) 3.3.3.1, "Radiation Monitoring," and TS 3.4.6.1, "Reactor Coolant System Leakage Detection Systems," at each unit to remove the requirement for one containment atmosphere gaseous radioactivity monitor to be operable in Modes 1, 2, 3 and 4. The requirement for one containment atmosphere particulate radioactivity monitor and one containment pocket sump level monitor to be operable in Modes 1, 2, 3 and 4 will remain. Additionally, corresponding changes to Surveillance Requirements 4.3.3.1 and 4.4.6.1 and modifications to existing TS Limiting Condition for Operation 3.4.6.1 action statements are proposed for each unit.

Sincerely,

Lara A. Dawson for

Brendan T. Moroney, Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch II-2
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-327 and 50-328

Enclosure: Public Notice

cc w/encl: Distribution via Listserv

PUBLIC NOTICE

NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO AMEND OPERATING LICENSES AT THE SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has received an application dated November 12, 2008, from Tennessee Valley Authority (licensee), for an exigent amendment to the operating license for the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, located in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

This notice relates to the licensee's application dated November 12, 2008, in which the licensee requests to revise Technical Specification (TS) 3.3.3.1, "Radiation Monitoring," and TS 3.4.6.1, "Reactor Coolant System Leakage Detection Systems," at each unit to remove the requirement for one containment atmosphere gaseous radioactivity monitor to be operable in Modes 1, 2, 3 and 4. The requirement for one containment atmosphere particulate radioactivity monitor and one containment pocket sump level monitor to be operable in Modes 1, 2, 3 and 4 will remain. Additionally, corresponding changes to Surveillance Requirements 4.3.3.1 and 4.4.6.1 and modifications to existing TS Limiting Condition for Operation (LCO) 3.4.6.1 action statements are proposed for each unit.

NRC Regulatory Guide 1.45, Revision 0 states that reactor coolant system (RCS) leakage monitoring instruments should be capable of detecting a 1 gallon per minute (gpm) leakage increase within 1 hour. Because of improvements in fuel integrity, many operating plants have reported experiencing very long gaseous radioactivity monitor response times to RCS leakage, considering realistic coolant activities.

On November 6, 2008, the NRC staff discussed with the licensee that the capability to detect 1 gpm in 1 hour regardless of RCS activity is required for the channel to be operable. The licensee subsequently declared the channel inoperable and entered the appropriate TS LCO 3.4.6.1 action statement for an inoperable gaseous radiation monitor. Because there is

insufficient activity in the RCS under current operating conditions to enable a gaseous monitor to sense a 1 gpm leak within 1 hour, the TS is being changed to resolve this issue. Furthermore, because the licensee is currently in a 30-day TS action statement completion time, this change is being processed as an exigent change in order to prevent an unnecessary shutdown and to allow the continued safe operation of the plant.

The licensee and the NRC staff have evaluated this proposed change with regard to the determination of whether or not a significant hazards consideration is involved. Operation of Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, in accordance with the proposed amendments will not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. The proposed change does not make any hardware changes and does not alter the configuration of any plant system, structure or component (SSC). The containment atmosphere gaseous radioactivity monitor is not credited for use in the initiation of any protective functions. The proposed change only removes the containment atmosphere gaseous radioactivity monitor from the operability requirements for TS 3.4.6.1 and TS 3.3.3.1. Therefore, the probability of occurrence of an accident is not increased. The TS will continue to require diverse means of leakage detection, thus ensuring that leakage due to cracks would continue to be identified prior to breakage and the plant shutdown accordingly. Therefore, the consequences of an accident are not increased.

The proposed amendments will not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously analyzed. The proposed change does not involve the use or installation of new equipment and the currently installed equipment will not be operated in a new or different manner. No new or different system interactions are created and no new processes are introduced. The proposed changes will not introduce any new failure mechanisms, malfunctions, or accident initiators not already considered in the design and licensing bases.

The proposed change does not affect any SSC associated with an accident initiator. Based on this evaluation, the proposed change does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

The proposed amendment will not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. The proposed change does not make any alteration to any RCS leakage detection components. The proposed change removes the gaseous channel of the containment atmosphere radioactivity monitor from TS 3.4.6.1 and TS 3.3.3.1. The proposed amendment continues to require diverse means of leakage detection with capability to promptly detect RCS leakage. Additional diverse means of leakage detection are available, although not provided in the TSs. Based on this evaluation, the proposed change does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

Following an initial review of this application, the requested amendments have been evaluated against the standards in Section 50.92, "Issuance of amendment," of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* and the NRC staff has made a proposed determination that the requested amendments involve no significant hazards considerations. The changes do not significantly increase the probability or consequences of any accident previously considered, nor create the possibility of an accident of a different kind, nor significantly decrease any margin of safety.

If the proposed determination that the requested license amendment involves no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the staff will issue the amendments without first offering an opportunity for a public hearing. An opportunity for a hearing will be published in the *Federal Register* at a later date and any hearing request will not delay the effective date of the amendment.

If the staff decides in its final determination that the amendment does involve a significant hazards consideration, a notice of opportunity for a prior hearing will be published in the *Federal Register* and, if a hearing is granted, it will be held before the amendment is issued.

Comments on the proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration may be (1) telephoned to Thomas H. Boyce, Chief, Plant Licensing Branch II-2, by collect call to 301-415-2024, or by facsimile to 301-415-1222, (2) e-mailed to tom.boyce@nrc.gov, or (3) submitted in writing to the Chief, Rulemaking, Directives and Editing Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. All comments received by close of business on December 4, 2008, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined electronically through the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading Room link at the NRC Web site http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html and at the Commission's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, Public File Area O1 F21, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. 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.resource@nrc.gov.

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Sincerely,
/RA by EBrown for/
Brendan T. Moroney, Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch II-2
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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