

D901211

The Honorable Kenneth M. Carr
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Carr:

SUBJECT: FULL-TERM OPERATING LICENSE FOR THE PALISADES NUCLEAR
PLANT

During the 368th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, December 6-8, 1990, we completed our review of the application by the Consumers Power Company (licensee) for conversion of the provisional operating license (POL) for the Palisades Nuclear Plant to a full-term operating license (FTOL). Our Subcommittee on FTOL Conversions also discussed this matter during a meeting on December 5, 1990. During our review, we had the benefit of discussions with representatives of the licensee and the NRC staff. We also had the benefit of the documents referenced. The Committee most recently discussed and reported on this plant in a letter dated May 11, 1982, relating to the Systematic Evaluation Program (SEP) review of Palisades.

The Palisades Nuclear Plant received a POL in December 1969 and began commercial operation in March 1971. The licensee applied for an FTOL in January 1974, but review of this application was deferred by the NRC staff in 1975, along with several other FTOL reviews. In 1978, Palisades was included in Phase II of the SEP because much of the review needed for the FTOL was similar in scope to that for the SEP.

The Committee, in its May 11, 1982 letter reporting on the results of the SEP as applied to Palisades, indicated that its review of the FTOL would be deferred until the NRC staff had completed its actions on the SEP issues that were still pending, and on the Unresolved Safety Issues (USIs) and TMI Action Plan items. All but three of the SEP issues were resolved to the satisfaction of the NRC staff, as reported in Supplement 1 to the Integrated Plant Safety Assessment Report for Palisades. The status of these three issues and of the USIs and TMI Action Plan items has been discussed by the staff in its Safety Evaluation Report related to the FTOL for Palisades. We believe that the procedures and schedules that have been agreed to for the resolution of these items are satisfactory, and that the remaining actions to resolve these items would not be accelerated by withholding an FTOL at this time.

We believe that there is reasonable assurance that the Palisades Nuclear Plant can continue to be operated at power levels up to 2530 Mwt under a full-term operating license without undue risk to the health and safety of the public.

Sincerely,

Carlyle Michelson
Chairman

References:

1. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NUREG-1424, "Safety Evaluation Report Related to the Full-Term Operating License for Palisades Nuclear Plant," dated November 1990
2. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NUREG-0820, "Integrated Plant Safety Assessment, Systematic Evaluation Program - Palisades," dated October 1982