



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
SUPPORTING AMENDMENT NO. 90 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-63
NIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATION
NINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 1
DOCKET NO. 50-220

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Following the accident at Three Mile Island in March 1979, a number of studies were conducted to determine why the accident occurred, what factors might have contributed to its severity, and what the industry and the NRC could do to prevent the recurrence of the same or a similar accident. These studies concluded, among other things, that a number of actions should be taken to improve the ability of shift operating personnel to recognize, diagnose, and effectively deal with plant transients or other abnormal conditions.

To address these recommended improvements, the NRC initiated both short-term and long-term efforts. The short-term effort required that as of January 1, 1980, each nuclear power plant have on duty a Shift Technical Advisor (STA) whose function was to provide engineering and accident assessment advice to the Shift Supervisor in the event of abnormal or accident conditions. The STA was required to have a bachelor's degree in engineering or the equivalent and specific training in plant response to transients and accidents.

In support of the long-term effort, the staff issued Generic Letter 86-04 (GL 86-04), Policy Statement on Engineering Expertise on Shift, on February 13, 1986. The Policy Statement offers the licensees two options for meeting the current requirements for providing engineering expertise on shift (NUREG-0737, Item I.A.1.1) and meeting licensed operator staffing requirements (10 CFR 50.54(m)(2)). Option 1 provides for elimination of the separate STA position by allowing licensees to combine one of the required Senior Reactor Operator (SRO) positions with the STA position into a dual-role (SRO/STA) position. Option 2 states that a licensee may continue to use an NRC-approved STA program while meeting licensed operator staffing requirements. Licensees may use either option on each shift.

By letter dated May 14, 1986, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC) (the licensee), responded to GL 86-04 regarding which option would be used at the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1 (NMP 1). NMPC stated that NMP 1 will normally use Option 1 as described in GL 86-04, except

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for those shifts which would be staffed by two SRO's plus a dedicated STA. In addition, NMPC proposed to remove the "equivalency" option to a bachelor's degree in a scientific or engineering discipline from the STA job description and introduce the alternative for a Professional Engineer's license.

2.0 EVALUATION

By application dated September 15, 1986, NMPC requested an amendment to Appendix A of Facility Operating License No. DPR-63 for the NMP1. The amendment would modify Technical Specification (TS) Sections 6.2.2, 6.3 and Table 6.2-1 to reflect changes required to conform to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's "Policy Statement on Engineering Expertise on Shift," Generic Letter 86-04. Specifically, the STA would be a licensed SRO and would also perform the function of Assistant Station Shift Supervisor. In addition, the "equivalency" option to a bachelor's degree in a scientific or engineering discipline would be removed from the STA job description and the alternative for a Professional Engineer's license, obtained by examination, would be added.

The TS changes identified above are a result of the issuance of GL 86-04. NMP 1 has chosen to implement Option 1 as described in GL 86-04, except for those times when one or more shifts would be staffed by two SRO's plus a dedicated STA. The use of either Option 1 or Option 2 on each shift is acceptable, as stated in GL 86-04. NMP 1 also proposes to eliminate the "equivalency" option to a bachelor's degree in a scientific or engineering discipline from the STA job description, and add the alternative for a Professional Engineer's license, obtained by examination. Personnel currently filling the STA position at NMP 1 have bachelor's degrees in Engineering or in Physical Science. Removing the "equivalency" option and adding the Professional Engineer's license has also been done in order to conform to GL 86-04, and is therefore acceptable.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

This amendment relates to changes in administrative requirements. Accordingly, this amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(10). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of this amendment.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The staff has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, and (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations and the issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security nor to the health and safety of the public.

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Dated: December 29, 1986

