



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 103 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-63

NIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATION

NINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR POWER STATION, UNIT NO. 1

DOCKET NO. 50-220

INTRODUCTION

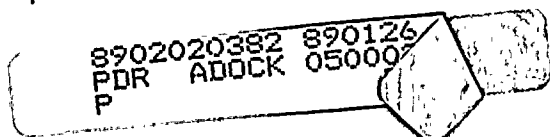
By letter dated January 14, 1988, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (the licensee) has proposed a change to Technical Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b) to eliminate a contradiction between that Specification and Specification 3.1.1.e. Currently, Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b) requires that, when reactor power is less than 20% and fewer than 12 control rods have been withdrawn, no control rods shall be moved without an operable rod worth minimizer. However, Specification 3.1.1.e requires that, when Technical Specifications 3.1.1.a through d are not met, (including an operable rod worth minimizer), the reactor shall be placed in hot shutdown within 10 hours. Thus, the rod movement requirement of Specification 3.1.1.e is prohibited by the contradiction of Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b).

In order to resolve this contradiction, the licensee has proposed to revise Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b) to require that, if the rod worth minimizer fails prior to the complete withdrawal of the first 12 rods, the rods are to be inserted in a reverse order from which they have been withdrawn. The revision would also require a second independent operator or engineer to verify that the operator at the reactor controls is following the control rod program in reverse order.

DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

The rod worth minimizer (RWM) is installed to enhance safety, during reactor startup, by blocking the withdrawal of control rods if they are pulled in improper order. If the RWM is inoperable while control rods are being withdrawn, this safety feature is not available to prevent unacceptable consequences from a potential control rod drop accident. By eliminating the contradiction noted above, the proposed revision would make Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b) consistent with the original intent that the reactor would be shut down if the RWM became inoperable. The revision is, therefore, acceptable.

The inclusion, in Specification 3.1.1.b(3)(b), of verification that the control rod program is being followed properly, adds to safety by assuring that control rods will be inserted in proper order. It is, therefore, acceptable.





ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

This amendment involves a change in the installation or use of the facility components located within the restricted areas as defined in 10 CFR 20. The staff has determined that this amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that this amendment involves no significant hazards consideration and there has been no public comment on such finding. Accordingly, this amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR Sec 51.22(c)(9). 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.

CONCLUSION

We have 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 these amendments will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Dated: January 26, 1989

PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTOR:

R. Benedict

