



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 135 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

By letter dated October 16, 1992, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (the licensee) submitted a request for changes to the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit No. 1 Technical Specifications (TS). The requested changes would revise TS Surveillance Requirement 4.1.4.b. to extend the current quarterly pump surveillance interval for Core Spray (CS) System 11 from January 10, 1993, until February 20, 1993.

Core Spray System 11 is one of two independent trains of the CS System and contains, in part, CS pumps 81-23 and 81-24 and CS topping pumps 81-49 and 81-50. The most recent quarterly pump surveillance test of CS System 11 was completed on September 17, 1992. Following completion of the surveillance, the licensee performed a walkdown which indicated that CS System 11 test valve 40-06 had closed but was damaged. This motor-operated valve is normally closed and is opened during testing to establish a flow path from the torus, through a pump set, and back to the torus. An engineering evaluation by the licensee indicated that the valve was still operable as an isolation valve. However, additional evaluation determined that valve 40-06 would require repairs to restore its ability to open/reclose. The licensee determined that a plant shutdown would be required to make the necessary repairs. Quarterly surveillance testing of the CS System 11 pumps cannot be performed with this valve closed.

The CS System 11 quarterly pump surveillance test is scheduled to be performed by December 18, 1992, or with the 25 percent extension, on January 10, 1993. The next refueling outage is currently scheduled to begin on January 2, 1993. However, the licensee is proposing to delay the start of this outage until February 19, 1993, based on New York Power Pool projections of operating reserve during the peak winter months of January and February. The licensee requested the TS change to support continued operation of the unit until the proposed, delayed start of the refueling outage.

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2.0 EVALUATION

The licensee has stated that the CS system's capability to provide emergency core cooling to the reactor vessel in the event of a loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) will not be compromised by extending the System 11 pump surveillance test interval from January 10, 1993, to February 20, 1993. This licensee conclusion was based on the following:

- a) Generic Letter (GL) 89-14, "Line-Item Improvements in Technical Specifications - Removal of the 3.25 Limit on Extending Surveillance Intervals," provided licensee's guidance for the removal of the 3.25 limit on extending surveillances and for allowing licensees to extend individual intervals up to 25 percent. The 25 percent extension was based, in part, on: (1) the fact that the most probable result of a surveillance test would be the verification of conformance with the surveillance requirements, and (2) a safety benefit is incurred when a surveillance interval is extended at a time when conditions are not suitable for performing the surveillance. The GL indicated that the NRC had routinely granted requests for one-time exceptions to the 3.25 limit on extending refueling surveillances because the risk to safety is low in contrast to the alternative of a forced shutdown to perform a surveillance.

The licensee stated that the bases in the GL for the 25 percent extension can be applied to the extension of the CS pump surveillance interval beyond the allowed 25 percent. This is based on: (1) the most probable result of the CS surveillance test would be verification of conformance with the surveillance requirements, and (2) a plant shutdown would be required to repair the test line isolation valve and perform the test.

- b) Based on the results of the last 14 surveillance tests, there is a high level of confidence that a CS System 11 pump surveillance test performed on the scheduled date of January 10, 1993, would verify pump operability.
- c) The licensing basis emergency core cooling system analyses take credit for only one core spray pump set during a LOCA. A pump set consists of one core spray pump and one topping pump. Accordingly, four 100 percent capacity pump sets are available. The high reliability of the core spray pumps provides a high level of confidence in the core spray system performing its design function.

The NRC staff has concluded that the proposed TS changes are consistent with the guidance contained in GL 89-14. In addition, in view of the long history of successful CS System 11 pump surveillance tests, the staff has confidence that the CS system will be capable of performing its safety function in the unlikely event that a LOCA occurs during the period of the surveillance interval extension. Accordingly, the NRC staff finds that the proposed TS changes are acceptable.



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3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the New York State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a surveillance requirement. The NRC staff has determined that the 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 the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (57 FR 53787). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 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 the amendment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission 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, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Principal Contributor: D. Fischer

Date: December 17, 1992



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