

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the matter of	)	
	)	
PP&L, INC.	)	Docket Nos. 50-387 and 50-388
	)	
(Susquehanna Steam Electric Station,	)	
Units 1 and 2)	)	

EXEMPTION

I.

PP&L, Inc., (PP&L or the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-14 and NPF-22, which authorize operation of the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 (SSES 1 & 2 or the facilities) at power levels not to exceed 3441 megawatts thermal. The facilities consist of two boiling-water reactors located at the licensee's site in Salem Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The licenses provide, among other things, that the licensee is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC, the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

II.

Section IV.F.2.b of Appendix E to 10 CFR Part 50 requires each licensee at each site to conduct an exercise of its onsite emergency plan every 2 years and indicates the exercise may be included in the full-participation biennial exercise required by paragraph 2.c. Paragraph 2.c requires offsite plans for each site to be exercised biennially with full participation by each offsite authority having a role under the plan. During such biennial full-participation

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exercises, the NRC evaluates onsite emergency preparedness activities and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) evaluates offsite emergency preparedness activities. PP&L successfully conducted a full-participation exercise for SSES during the week of October 28, 1997. By letter dated January 29, 1999, as supplemented by letter dated May 24, 1999, the licensee requested an exemption from Sections IV.F.2.b and c of Appendix E regarding the conduct of a full-participation exercise originally scheduled for November 15, 1999. This one-time change in the exercise schedule would increase the interval in this one instance between full-participation exercises from the current 2 years to 3 years.

The Commission, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(1), may grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50 that are authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security. The Commission, however, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2), will not consider granting an exemption unless special circumstances are present. Under 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(v), special circumstances are present whenever the exemption would provide only temporary relief from the applicable regulation and the licensee or applicant has made good faith efforts to comply with the regulation.

### III

The licensee requests a one-time change in the schedule for the next full-participation exercise for the SSES facilities. Subsequent full-participation exercises for the facilities would be scheduled at no greater than two year intervals in accordance with 10 CFR Part 50 Appendix E, Section IV.F.2.c. Accordingly, the exemption would provide only temporary relief from that regulation.

As indicated in the licensee's request for an exemption of January 29, 1999, the licensee had originally scheduled a full-participation exercise for the week of November 15,

1999. As further set forth in that letter, however, FEMA indicated that schedule conflicts precluded their participation in such an exercise in November 1999, and requested that the exercise be rescheduled. In a letter dated March 11, 1999, FEMA documented its position and noted that the affected Pennsylvania jurisdictions do not object to changing the date of the exercise. In addition, the NRC concurred with FEMA's request, and asked that the exercise be scheduled in the year 2000 to relieve resource demands. Accordingly, the licensee made a good faith effort to comply with the schedule requirements of Appendix E for full-participation exercises.

The staff completed its evaluation of the licensee's request for an exemption and the licensee's proposed compensatory measures that it would take to maintain the level of emergency preparedness over the third year. These compensatory measures include training for on-site emergency response organization personnel; on-site health physics drills; off-site emergency response training and plan preparation and drills involving county and municipal volunteers (with critique from trained licensee employees); and routine testing of emergency sirens and notification systems. The staff considered that these measures are adequate to maintain the level of emergency preparedness over the third year. The staff, having considered the schedule and resource issues within FEMA Region III and Region I of the Commission and the proposed licensee compensatory measures, believes that the request should be granted.

#### IV.

The Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix E, this exemption is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property or the common defense and security, and is otherwise in the public interest. Further, the Commission has determined, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), that special circumstances of 10 CFR 50.12(a)(v) are applicable in that the exemption would provide only temporary relief from the applicable regulation and the



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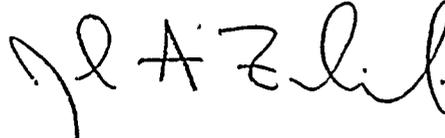
licensee has made good faith efforts to comply with the regulation. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants the exemption from Section IV.F.2.b and c of Appendix E to 10 CFR Part 50.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (64 FR 33326).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of September 1999.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Zwolinski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "Z".

John A. Zwolinski, Director  
Division of Licensing Project Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation