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Regulatory Improvements for Power Reactors Transitioning to Decommissioning

Comment On: NRC-2015-0070-0178

Regulatory Improvements for Power Reactors Transitioning to Decommissioning; Request for Comment on Draft Regulatory Basis

Document: NRC-2015-0070-DRAFT-0204

Comment on FR Doc # 2017-05141

Submitter Information

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General Comment

EnergySolutions comments are attached

Attachments

CD17-0138_NRC Comment Letter

June 13, 2017

CD17-0138

Ms. Annette Vietti-Cook
Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001
ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Subject: Comments on the NRC Draft Regulatory Basis Document Regulatory Improvements for Power Reactors Transitioning to Decommissioning; Docket ID: NRC-2015-0070

Project Number: 689

Dear Ms. Vietti-Cook:

On March 15, 2017, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a notice in the Federal Register soliciting public comments on the agency's draft Regulatory Basis Document (RBD) for a rulemaking proposing changes to the Commission's decommissioning regulations. Subsequently, on May 9, 2017, the NRC issued a notice soliciting public comments on a preliminary draft regulatory analysis that supports the RBD.

This letter provides EnergySolutions comments on both the RBD and the preliminary draft regulatory analysis. In general, our review concludes that these draft documents provide a sound foundation for several regulatory improvements that would, if implemented, achieve the objective stated in NRC's Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) as "to implement appropriate regulatory changes that reduce the number of licensing actions needed during decommissioning". In general we support the recommendations and comments contained in NEI's comments on the RB. Our specific comments are as follows:

1. This rulemaking process needs to include the entire decommissioning period from start to finish. Just focusing on the initial actions to transition from operations to permanent shutdown misses the opportunity to improve the regulations for the entire decommissioning process for such related actions as revising Part 37 to remove overly restrictive security requirements for large components and allowing longer transit times for rail cars traveling to disposal sites than currently specified in 10 CFR 20, Appendix G.
2. This rulemaking should also allow large stranded components at operating facilities to utilize excess decommissioning funds to dispose of those components while operating instead of waiting until permanent shutdown to allow access to the decommissioning trust fund. This improvement would minimize the cost for storage, security and maintenance for these components that are now incurred by operating reactors.

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We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft regulatory basis document and preliminary draft regulatory analysis and look forward to reviewing and commenting in more detail on the draft regulatory analysis published with the proposed rule.

In sum, EnergySolutions strongly urges the NRC to continue on a path of completing a rulemaking to improve the efficiency of the decommissioning process as expeditiously as possible. In the meantime, it continues to be important that NRC staff remain committed to the timely review of exemptions and license amendments that are necessary until this rulemaking can be completed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerard van Noordennen".

Gerard van Noordennen
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs

cc: Rod McCullum, NEI