



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
SUPPORTING AMENDMENT NO. 36 TO PROVISIONAL OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-18
ROCHESTER GAS AND ELECTRIC CORPORATION
R. E. GINNA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT
DOCKET NO. 50-244

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated August 15, 1980, the NRC requested that all Westinghouse pressurized water reactor licensees review their technical specifications and procedures and make whatever revisions were necessary to assure that exposure of fuel assemblies and control rods cannot occur during transfer while the plant is undergoing refueling. Specifically, we requested that the Ginna Specifications be modified to require at least 23 feet of water over the top of the reactor pressure vessel flange during movement of fuel assemblies or control rods.

By letter dated September 26, 1980, Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (RG&E) (the licensee) informed the NRC that the normal practice at the Ginna Plant had been to maintain 24.5 feet of water above the reactor vessel flange during refueling. However, such a requirement was not part of the Ginna Technical Specifications and a commitment to revise the specification was included in the September 26, 1980 letter. This commitment was fulfilled in the application notarized November 12, 1980 (submitted by letter dated November 17, 1980). Part of this submittal pertained to a request for technical specification changes regarding decay heat removal; these changes will be reviewed at a later date.

2.0 EVALUATION

The NRC concern originated from the fact that, from the vessel seated position, a fuel assembly may need to be lifted in excess of 23 feet in order to clear the vessel flange for movement to the fuel transfer system. Typically, there is an additional 12 to 18 inches of upward travel to ensure that the fuel assembly is fully withdrawn into the manipulator crane outer mask. Consequently, part of the fuel assembly could be exposed if the depth of water over the assemblies in the core did not exceed 23 feet.

In their letter of September 26, 1980, RG&E noted that Ginna normally maintains approximately 24.5 feet of water above the reactor vessel flange during refueling. Further, the Ginna manipulator crane lifts the bottom of the fuel assembly no more than one foot above the reactor vessel flange during the transfer, resulting in a water height of approximately 10 feet above the top of the fuel assemblies and control rods at their highest point during the transfer.

The NRC Technical Specification would require a minimum of 23 feet of water over the top of the reactor pressure vessel flange during movement of fuel assemblies or control rods. This requirement would assure that the minimum level of water over the fuel assemblies or control rods is approximately 33 feet, which is a sufficient depth to prevent inadvertent exposure of a fuel assembly or control rod during transfer.

RG&E has proposed technical specifications which would meet the intent of the requirements contained in our August 15, 1980 letter. We have reviewed their proposed specifications, as modified with mutual agreement during telephone discussions, and have found them to be acceptable.

Also, as part of the application, RG&E proposed changes to the Ginna Technical Specifications to bring portions of the specifications together in a more coherent manner. Because this was an administrative change only, we have found it to be acceptable.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

We have determined that the proposed amendment does not authorize a change in effluent types, increase in total amounts of effluents, or an increase in power level, and will not result in any significant environmental impact. Having made this determination, we have concluded that the amendment involves an action which is insignificant from the standpoint of environmental impact, and, pursuant to 10 CFR 51.5(d)(4), that an environmental impact statement or negative declaration and environmental impact appraisal need not be prepared in connection with the issuance of this amendment.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We also conclude, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) because the amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of accidents previously considered and does not involve a significant decrease in a safety margin, the amendment does not involve a significant hazards consideration; (2) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner; and (3) 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 or the health and safety of the public.

Date: March 2, 1981