



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 7 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-41
AND AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-51
ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY, ET AL.
PALO VERDE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2
DOCKET NOS. STN 50-528 AND STN 50-529

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated August 3, 1986, the Arizona Public Service Company (APS) on behalf of itself, the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District, Southern California Edison Company, El Paso Electric Company, Public Service Company of New Mexico, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and Southern California Public Power Authority (licensees), requested an emergency change to the Technical Specifications (Appendix A to Facility Operating Licenses NPF-41 and NPF-51) for the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2, respectively. The proposed change would revise Technical Specification 3/4.7.7 in each license to allow the use of the 1980 version of ANSI Standard N509 in lieu of the 1976 version to meet the guidelines of Regulatory Guide 1.52, Revision 2, for the control room essential filtration system.

2.0 DISCUSSION

Palo Verde Unit 1 is currently in commercial operation, Palo Verde Unit 2 has received an operating license and is in power ascension testing, and Unit 3 is in preoperational testing and has not yet received an operating license. The design of the control room essential filtration system is the same for all three units.

During a recent review of documentation for the Palo Verde Unit 3 control room essential filtration system, the licensees determined that the charcoal in the filter beds for the control room essential filtration system did not meet one of the requirements of ANSI Standard N509 (1976); i.e., the removal efficiency for Methyl Iodide at 25°C and 95% relative humidity was slightly below the required value of 99%. Since Technical Specification 3/4.7.7 for Palo Verde Units 1 and 2 require that the charcoal filters for the control room essential filtration system meet the requirements of ANSI Standard N509 (1976), the licensees performed an evaluation of these charcoal filters for Units 1 and 2.

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The licensees determined from the above evaluation that the removal efficiency for Methyl Iodide at 25°C and 95% relative humidity for the charcoal filters in both trains of Palo Verde Unit 1 and in one train of Palo Verde 2 was between 98% and 99% and, hence, did not meet ANSI Standard N509 (1976). The licensees also evaluated the charcoal filters against the 1980 version of ANSI N509 and determined that the filters met all of the requirements for the 1980 version (this version allows a 97% removal efficiency for Methyl Iodide at 30°C and 95% relative humidity).

As a result of the above findings, the licensees submitted a request, dated August 3, 1986, for an Emergency Technical Specification change to Specification 3/4.7.7 for both Units 1 and 2 to allow the use of ANSI Standard N509 (1980) for testing the charcoal filters in the control room essential filtration system. In the request, the licensees stated that the staff acceptance of the 1980 version of the standard is documented in Revision 2 to Section 6.5.1 of the Standard Review Plan (NUREG-0800).

3.0 EVALUATION

This proposed change falls into the category of an emergency change since failure of the NRC to take action would result in Palo Verde Unit 1 shutting down and remaining shutdown until the request is granted. In addition, Palo Verde Unit 2 would not be able to resume its power ascension test program until the request is granted, which would significantly delay full power operation.

The need for the proposed action was not determined until August 1, 1986. The staff has reviewed the facts concerning the request and concludes that APS has made a timely submittal, that power operation for Unit 1 and the power ascension program for Unit 2 cannot proceed without NRC action, and that action by the licensees could not preclude this situation.

The action requested by the licensees is to change Specification 3/4.7.7 to permit the use of the 1980 version of ANSI Standard N509, in lieu of the 1976 version, for meeting the guidelines of Regulatory Guide 1.52, Revision 2, Positions C.6.a and C.6.b, for charcoal filters in the control room essential filtration system. The use of the 1980 version of ANSI N509 was previously found acceptable for this purpose as documented in Revision 2 of Section 6.5.1 of the Standard Review Plan (NUREG-0800).

The staff has reviewed the information submitted by the licensees. Based on that review and the above evaluation, the staff finds the licensees' request to be acceptable. Staff approval of the request was granted to APS by phone on August 5, 1986.

4.0 FINAL NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION

Based on the review of the licensees' submittal as described herein, the staff has made a final determination that the licensees' amendment request does not involve a significant hazards consideration since operation of Palo Verde Units 1 and 2 with the requested change would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously analyzed since the acceptance criteria in the 1980 version of ANSI Standard N509 are still within the assumptions used in accident analyses, (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously analyzed since no changes are being made to the design or operation of the facilities, and (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety since there are only minor differences between the 1976 and 1980 versions of ANSI Standard N509.

5.0 CONTACT WITH STATE OFFICIAL

The State was informed by telephone on August 5, 1986 of the staff's no significant hazards consideration determination. The State contact had no comments on the this determination.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

These amendments involve a change in an inspection or surveillance requirement. The staff has determined that the amendments involve no significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The staff has also determined that the amendments involve no significant hazards consideration. The amendments meet 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 to be prepared in connection with the issuance of these amendments.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The staff 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 these amendments will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public. We, therefore, conclude that the request is acceptable.

Dated: AUG 11 1986

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