



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 232 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-33

AMENDMENT NO. 248 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-52

AMENDMENT NO. 208 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-68

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

BROWNS FERRY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1, 2, AND 3

DOCKET NOS. 50-259, 50-260, AND 50-296

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated August 30, 1996, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA, the licensee) requested amendment of the operating licenses for the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant (BFN) Units 1, 2, and 3. The proposed amendment deletes an existing license condition regarding thermal water quality standards.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE

The licensee proposes deletion of license condition 2.C.(3), which states,

In the operation of the facility, the licensee shall, pursuant to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-500), comply with all applicable thermal water quality standards of the State of Alabama and the United States.

3.0 EVALUATION

The licensee's August 30, 1996 submittal states:

Water effluent thermal limits for BFN are established by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management as an authorized state for administration of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) pursuant to the Clean Water Act. As such, TVA believes that the State of Alabama and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have jurisdiction over such limits, and the subject license condition is redundant and should be deleted [from the BFN license].

The licensee's NPDES permit for BFN (No. AL0022080) provides limitations on thermal discharges and other nonradiological effluents resulting from plant operations. This permit is granted by the State of Alabama, and must be renewed every five years. The NRC does not have authority to regulate the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; however, removal of the license condition does not relieve the licensee of its obligation to operate within the environmental limits imposed by the State of Alabama or responsible Federal

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agencies such as EPA. Therefore, the proposed change does not affect limits on non-radiological effluents.

The licensee notes that the thermal discharge limits have no effect on plant safety analyses. These analyses are dependent upon inlet water temperature. Since the plant discharges water downstream of the intake, the staff agrees the thermal discharge limits do not adversely affect plant safety. Since the plant safety analyses are unaffected by the proposed change, there is no change in radiological effluents.

On May 5, 1997, the NRR Project Manager for Browns Ferry discussed the proposed change with Mr. Jimmy Coles, Chief of the Industrial Waste Water Section, Water Division, of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. Mr. Coles was briefed on the proposed deletion of the thermal water quality license condition, TVA's rationale for the change, and the basis for the NRC staff's acceptance of the change. Mr. Coles did not express any objection to the proposed change.

The proposed change does not adversely affect plant safety, and does not affect the licensee's obligation to operate in accordance with environmental requirements. Therefore, the proposed change is acceptable.

#### 4.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Alabama State official (Kirk Whatley) was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

#### 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendments delete requirements based on or applicable to a matter subject to the provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. Accordingly, the amendments meet the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(17). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendments.

#### 6.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based upon the considerations discussed above, that: (1) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations; (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) issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security.

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Dated: July 8, 1997



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