

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE 37401

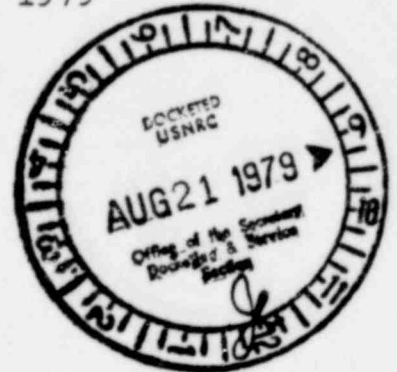
400 Chestnut Street Tower II

August 6, 1979

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DOCKET NUMBER

PETITION RULE PRM - 2-8 (44FR 32489)



Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Attention: Docketing and Service Branch

Dear Sir:

In response to the June 6, 1979, Federal Register notice (44 FR 32489), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is pleased to provide comments on the Union of Concerned Scientists and Natural Resources Defense Council petition concerning amendments to 10 CFR Part 21 and methods for the developing future regulations.

We believe the amendment to Part 21 (as noticed in the October 19, 1978, Federal Register (43 FR 48621)), for "off-the-shelf" items is adequate from the standpoint of health and safety and should not be repealed. The Part 21 amendment recognizes that the quality and safety level of an "off-the-shelf" item can be assured initially by the manufacturer meeting the applicable industry codes and standards, and only after dedication of an "off-the-shelf" item into nuclear safety-related services is there a need for Part 21 to apply.

Before the amendment, we experienced difficulty in procuring commercial grade components from many manufacturers who had been servicing the nuclear industry because they refused to supply their products under Part 21. Since the nuclear business constituted such a small percentage of their total business, these manufacturers were willing to lose this business. Therefore, we had to consider obtaining equipment from a considerably smaller selection of suppliers which eliminated a portion of the competitive market. Additionally, some of these manufacturers were the only suppliers for certain components needed for nuclear service in TVA's designs. In those cases we have had to consider redesign (usually more expensive or less efficient) to allow procurement of different components that could be obtained under Part 21.

Acknowledged by card..... 8/21 mch

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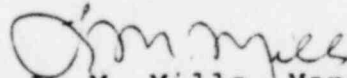
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The petitioners have not shown that a return to these conditions is warranted from a health and safety standpoint. Indeed, without the Part 21 amendments there was a potential for levels of quality performance and reliability to be degraded because of the unavailability of "off-the-shelf" items. However, we do support the concept of a review of Part 21 experience with an eye toward modification where necessary for the protection of public health and safety and would be willing to work with the NRC staff formally or informally in this regard.

Very truly yours,

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY



L. M. Mills, Manager
Nuclear Regulation and Safety

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