



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
SUPPORTING THE CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION DATE EXTENSION
FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS TRIGA (MARK II) RESEARCH REACTOR
DOCKET NO. 50-602

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55(b), the University of Texas (UT or applicant) by letter of November 7, 1989 requested an amendment to the University of Texas TRIGA Mark II Research Reactor (UTTRR) Construction Permit No. CPRR-123 to extend the currently specified latest construction completion date of December 31, 1989 to April 30, 1990.

Subsequently, by letter dated November 27, 1989, UT requested that the application of November 7, 1989 be amended to reflect a construction completion date of December 31, 1990.

2.0 EVALUATION

On October 13, 1988, the project general contractor was terminated by UT due to inability to meet the construction schedule. The project was further delayed while the surety company put a new general contractor in place. UT requested a construction permit expiration date extension from December 31, 1988 to December 31, 1989. The extension was approved by the staff and an Order was issued on February 24, 1989.

These events affected the timetable of the entire project to a greater extent than originally anticipated. Construction was completed on August 31, 1989. The completion of corrective work, testing, and inspection of systems will extend beyond the December 31, 1989 construction permit expiration date. To ensure adequate time to complete corrective work on the facility, allow time for completion of the inspection program by the NRC staff, and allow for completion of licensing activities by the NRC staff, the licensee has requested a construction permit expiration date of December 31, 1990.

The staff concludes that the reasons for the delay of the facility are beyond the control of the applicant and that good cause has been shown for the delays. The staff also concludes that the requested extension is for a reasonable period of time.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The staff has considered the environmental impacts of the extension of the construction permit and has determined that the proposed action does not entail any significant different construction activities from those which were considered in the Environmental Assessment for Construction and Operation of the Proposed TRIGA Research Reactor of the University of Texas dated May 13, 1985.

The staff, therefore, concludes that the proposed action will not alter the conclusions reached in the Environmental Assessment regarding the environmental impacts of construction of the University of Texas TRIGA research reactor. Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that extending the construction completion date will have no significant impact on the environment (55 FR 4498 February 8, 1990).

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The staff, based on the above evaluation, concludes that the factors that have prompted the applicant to delay the completion of construction of the UTTRR were beyond the control of the applicant and constitute good cause for the delay in completion of construction under 10 CFR 50.55(b). Therefore, the staff finds that the requested amendment to the construction completion date is reasonable. The staff further concludes that the proposed delay will not result in any significant increase in public health and safety risks or environmental impacts. The only modification proposed by the applicant to the existing construction permit is an extension of the latest completion date. The extension does not allow any work to be performed involving new safety information of a type not considered by the staff prior to issuance of the existing construction permit.

Therefore, the staff finds that: (1) this action does not involve a significant hazard consideration as there is no radiological health and safety question involved here; (2) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by extension of the construction completion date; and (3) good cause exists for issuance of an order extending the completion. Accordingly, based upon the foregoing evaluation, the NRC staff has concluded that issuance of an order extending the latest completion date for construction of the UTTRR is reasonable and should be authorized. The latest completion date should be extended to December 31, 1990.

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Dated: February 9, 1990