

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

DOCKET NO. 50-328

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS
CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-79, issued to Tennessee Valley Authority (the licensee), for operation of the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Unit 2, located in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

The amendment would authorize a temporary change in the surveillance requirements for rod drop tests and calibration of full length control rod position (rod bottom) limit switches. The licensee is required to demonstrate periodically (every 18-22 months) that the control rods will drop from the withdrawn position to the fully inserted position within a certain specified time. Also, the full length control rod position limit switches are calibrated in the remote shutdown control room during the same period of time. Control rods are verified to be operable every 31 days in accordance with other provisions of the Technical Specifications. Technical requirements associated with the restart of Unit 2 at this stage of the core life cycle, such as Xenon buildup, would make it impractical to return to power operations after July 16, 1983. The proposed amendment would increase the surveillance period by 20 days. The maximum surveillance interval permitted by the Technical Specifications is 688 days. This request was made to permit the licensee to carry out the control rod tests and calibration of the limit switches to coincide with the scheduled refueling for Unit 2 which will occur no later than August 5, 1983. These revisions to the technical specifications would be made in response to the licensee's application for amendment dated June 21, 1983.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendment, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The Commission has provided guidance for the application of these criteria by providing examples of amendments that are considered not likely to involve significant hazards consideration (48 FR 14870). One of the examples of actions likely to involve no significant hazards considerations relates to a change which either may result in some increase to the probability or consequences of a previously-analyzed accident or may reduce in some way a safety margin, but where the results of the change are clearly within all acceptable criteria with respect to the system or component specified in the Standard Review Plan.

A review of the licensee's submittal dated June 21, 1983, in accordance with the standard of 10 CFR 50.92 provides sufficient information to conclude that the proposed amendment for increasing the surveillance interval by less than 3 percent falls within the category of the cited example and does not involve a significant hazards consideration, because it involves no significant increase in the probability

or consequences of a previously analyzed accident, does not significantly reduce a safety margin, and the results of the change are clearly within all acceptable criteria with respect to systems or components specified in the Standard Review plan.

Based on the testing that Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is continuing to perform and the experience to date, TVA believes that the rods will drop within the required time limits and that the rod bottom lights will work if needed. Also, because the increase in the surveillance interval is less than 3 percent of the total time interval, TVA does not believe there will be an increase in the rod drop time or that the increase in surveillance interval will increase the probability of the rod bottom switches to not operate properly. Based on the fact that the control rods are tested every 31 days in accordance with the surveillance requirements and that rod drop times have not been a problem at other plants with Westinghouse equipment, TVA believes that the equipment will respond as designed. The increase in the surveillance interval does not reduce the margin of safety and the testing and experience to date lead TVA to believe that the equipment will operate as designed.

Therefore, based on these considerations and the three criteria given above, the Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission has determined that failure to act in a timely way would result in an early shutdown of the facility. Therefore, the Commission has insufficient time to issue its usual 30-day notice of the proposed action for public comment.

If the proposed determination becomes final, an opportunity for a hearing will be published in the Federal Register at a later date and any hearing request will not delay the effective date of the amendment.

If the Commission decides in its final determination that the amendment does involve a significant hazards consideration, a notice of opportunity for a prior hearing will be published in the Federal Register and, if a hearing is granted, it will be held before any amendment is issued.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration. Comments on the proposed determination may be telephoned to Elinor G. Adensam, Chief of Licensing Branch No. 4, by collect call to (301) 492-7831 or submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D. C. 20555, Attn: Docketing and Service Branch. All comments received by July 14, 1983, will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. and at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library, 1001 Broad Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402.

Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this 23rd day of June 1983.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Elinor G. Adensam, Chief
Licensing Branch No. 4
Division of Licensing