UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY

DOCKET NO. 50-458

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. NPF-47, issued to Gulf States Utilities Company (GSU) (the licensee), for operation of the River Bend Station, Unit 1, located in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.

In letters dated August 22, 1990, and October 17, 1990, GSU proposed an amendment which would permanently disable the steam condensing mode (SCM) of the residual heat removal (RHR) system. The August 22, 1990, submittal was previously noticed on September 19, 1990 (55 FR 38602), and described GSU's plans to weld plugs in the steam supply lines. Due to the exposure rates predicted using this method, GSU provided supplemental information in a letter dated October 17, 1990, which described the removal of the two steam supply line valves in the auxiliary building and installation of a blind flange in place of each. The two methods accomplish the same purpose, closing off the steam lines, but the latter will result in lower worker exposures. The TS modifications originally proposed remain unchanged.

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 licensee provided a revised analysis that addressed the above three standards with regard to the addition of the blank flanges. The analysis addressing the rest of the proposed amendment remains unchanged, but is repeated for completeness.

1. The proposed change would not significantly increase the probability or consequences of an accident because the only accident is the high energy line break (HELB) in the steam tunnel and auxiliary building. Valves 1E12*MOVF052A and B will be replaced by blind flanges in the steam supply lines to the RHR heat exchangers. With the proposed location of the blind flanges, a HELB in the auxiliary building due to the rupture of steam line to the RHR heat exchangers is unchanged from originally contained in the SAR. The HELB of the steam lines in the steam tunnel and of the RCIC [Reactor Coolant Isolation Cooling] steam supply line in the auxiliary building have also been previously evaluated and this analysis is not affected.

   The HELB of the steam supply line is terminated by the closure of the containment isolation valves 1E51*MOVF063 and

064. This modification does not affect the operability of these valves or associated instrumentation. GSU has re-evaluated the setpoint of the RHR/RCIC steam line flow-high isolation instrumentation and concluded that the existing setpoint is adequate. This conclusion is based upon the mass and energy release calculations for steam line breaks in the steam tunnel and auxiliary building. Calculations indicate that for a break of the 4" RCIC steam supply line in the auxiliary building, the existing trip setpoint would be exceeded within 0.1 seconds after the break and that flow would be terminated by closure of the containment isolation valves within 12 seconds. Lowering the existing setpoint would not significantly increase the response time of the containment isolation valves or decrease the inventory lost through the break. All equipment in the area is qualified based on the existing setpoint and calculated inventory loss. No increase in offsite release rates in excess of those previously calculated would occur as a result of maintaining the existing setpoint. Based upon the above, GSU concludes that the current setpoint of 60.7 inches H_2O is adequate and should become the permanent setpoint.

The blind flanges will be fabricated and installed to the same quality requirements as the original piping. Also the steam line piping supports were reviewed for the decreased weight and will be modified to ensure the seismic adequacy of the line. The blank flanges have been located so as to ensure that piping designed for steam service remains drained.

Valves 1E12*MOVF052A, 1E12*MOVF052B, and 1E12*MOVF026A were identified in the Fire Hazards Analysis as valves that must not spuriously reposition during a fire event. To ensure that these valves could be placed in the correct position during a fire event, control switches for these valves were included on the remote shutdown panel. Spurious repositioning of 1E12*MOVF052A or B could result in an interfacing system LOCA [Loss of Coolant Accident] (Wash 1400, Event V). Spurious repositioning of 1E12*MOVF026A could result in an overpressurization of the RCIC pump suction piping. With the implementation of this modification, the above events are no longer possible. The blind flanges in the RHR steam supply lines remove the possibility of the interfacing system LOCA. Electrically disabling 1E12*MOVF026A ensures that the valve cannot spuriously open during a fire event.

A review of the transient analyses (Chapter 15 of SAR [Safety Analysis Report]) indicates that no credit has been taken for the SCM, including the radiological consequences of an MSIV [Main Steam Isolation Valve] isolation event as analyzed in [the] SAR. Section 15.2.4.2 did not take credit for SCM of RHR. Therefore, the elimination of this mode of operation will not affect the radiological consequences as reported in the SAR Section 15.2.4.5 for the MSIV isolation event.

The only analysis which may be impacted by the permanent disabling of SCM is the number of main steam SRV [Safety/Relief Valve] cycles following an MSIV isolation. The SRV cycle analysis

has been performed assuming that the SCM is unavailable. The value obtained is not greater than the current value of 15 used in Section A.6A.9 of the SAR.

It is, therefore, concluded that this modification does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequence of an accident.

2. The proposed change would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated because the design, fabrication and installation of the blind flanges will be to the same requirements as the original piping (ASME III, Div. I). The blind flanges have been located so as to ensure that piping designed for steam service does not fill with water. Measures have been taken to ensure that the piping designed for steam service remains drained. No new or different relationships or interfaces with other systems or components have been created which could result in a new or different type of accident.

3. The proposed change would not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety because there are no Technical Specification requirements for the SCM of RHR to be operable. Also, this mode is not a requirement for any other system required to be operable per the Technical Specifications.

Technical Specification Section 3/4.3.2, "Isolation Actuation Instrumentation," specifies that the RHR/RCIC steam line flow-high trip setpoint be less than or equal to 60.7 inches of water. This setpoint has been evaluated based on an RCIC steam supply line break

maximum flow with the SCM of RHR disabled. A review of the mass and energy release calculations for a break of the 4" RCIC steam supply line in the auxiliary building indicates that the containment isolation valves would perform their function within the same time frame as previously analyzed. There would be no increase in offsite release rates. Environmental conditions in the RCIC steam line areas are not affected.

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

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 30 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination. The Commission will not normally make a final determination unless it receives a request for a hearing.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Regulatory Publications Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room P-223, Phillips Building, 7920 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By November 23, 1990, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and petitions for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714, which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555 and at the local public document room located at the Government Documents Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR §2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made a party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition

should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to fifteen (15) days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If a hearing is requested, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 30-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 30-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish a notice of issuance and provide for opportunity for a hearing after issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last ten (10) days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1 (800) 325-6000 (in Missouri 1 (800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number 3737 and the following message addressed to James C. Linville: petitioner's name and telephone number; date petition was mailed; plant name; and publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and to Mark Wetterhahn, Esq., Bishop, Cook, Purcell and Reynolds, 1401 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer, or the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request, should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(i)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated October 17, 1990, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street,

N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, and at the Government Documents Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of October 1990.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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