

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONWOLF CREEK NUCLEAR OPERATING CORPORATIONDOCKET NO. 50-482WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATIONENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations for Facility Operating License No. NPF-42, issued to Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS) located in Coffee County, Kansas.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would allow implementation of a hand geometry biometric system of site access control such that photograph identification badges can be taken off site.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated November 23, 1994, for exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power plant reactors against radiological sabotage."

The Need for the Proposed Action:

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, paragraph (a), the licensee shall establish and maintain an onsite physical protection system and security organization.

Paragraph (1) of 10 CFR 73.55(d), "Access Requirements," specifies that "licensee shall control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area...." It is specified in 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) that "A numbered picture badge identification system shall be used for all individuals who are

authorized access to protected areas without escort." It also states that an individual not employed by the licensee (i.e., contractors) may be authorized access to protected areas without escort provided the individual "receives a picture badge upon entrance into the protected area which must be returned upon exit from the protected area..."

Currently, unescorted access into protected areas of the WCGS is controlled through the use of a photograph on a combination badge and keycard. (Hereafter, these are referred to as badges). The security officers at the entrance station use the photograph on the badge to visually identify the individual requesting access. The badges for both licensee employees and contractor personnel who have been granted unescorted access are issued upon entrance at the entrance/exit location and are returned upon exit. The badges are stored and are retrievable at the entrance/exit location. In accordance with 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5), contractor individuals are not allowed to take badges off site. In accordance with the plant's physical security plans, neither licensee employees nor contractors are allowed to take badges off site.

The licensee proposes to implement an alternative unescorted access control system which would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges at the entrance/exit location and would allow all individuals with unescorted access to keep their badges with them when departing the site.

An exemption from 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) is required to permit contractors to take their badges off site instead of returning them when exiting the site.

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action. Under the proposed system, each individual who is authorized for unescorted entry into protected areas would have the physical characteristics of their hand (hand geometry) registered with their badge number in the access

control system. When an individual enters the badge into the card reader and places the hand on the measuring surface, the system would record the individual's hand image. The unique characteristics of the extracted hand image would be compared with the previously stored template to verify authorization for entry. Individuals, including licensee employees and contractors, would be allowed to keep their badges with them when they depart the site.

Based on a Sandia report entitled "A Performance Evaluation of Biometric Identification Devices" (SAND91--0276 UC--906 Unlimited Release, printed June 1991), and on its experience with the current photo-identification system, the licensee stated that the false acceptance rate of the proposed hand geometry system is comparable to that of the current system. The licensee stated that the use of the badges with the hand geometry system would increase the overall level of access control. Since both the badge and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected area, the proposed system would provide for a positive verification process. Potential loss of a badge by an individual, as a result of taking the badge off site, would not enable an unauthorized entry into protected areas. The licensee will implement a process for testing the proposed system to ensure continued overall level of performance equivalent to that specified in the regulation. The Physical Security Plan for WCGS will be revised to include implementation and testing of the hand geometry access control system and to allow licensee employees and contractors to take their badges off site.

The access process will continue to be under the observation of security personnel. A numbered picture badge identification system will continue to be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without

escorts. Badges will continue to be displayed by all individuals while inside the protected area.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluent that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request. Such action would not change any current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of Wolf Creek Generating Station," dated June 1982 (NUREG-0878).

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The NRC staff consulted with the State of Kansas regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

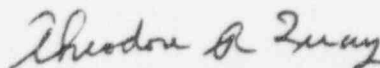
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated November 23, 1994, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC and at the local public document rooms located at the Emporia State University, William Allen White Library, 1200 Commercial Street, Emporia, Kansas 66801, and Washburn University School of Law Library, Topeka, Kansas 66621.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of January 1995.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Theodore R. Quay, Director  
Project Directorate IV-2  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation