



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 215 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-56

PECO ENERGY COMPANY
PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY
DELMARVA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY
ATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC COMPANY

PEACH BOTTOM ATOMIC POWER STATION, UNIT NO. 3

DOCKET NO. 50-278

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated September 1, 1995, the PECO Energy Company (the licensee) submitted a request for changes to the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Unit No. 3, Facility Operating License (FOL). The requested changes would delete FOL License Condition 2.C.(5) which restricts power levels to no less than seventy percent in a coastdown condition.

The NRC orally granted Notice of Enforcement Discretion (NOED) 95-6-013 on August 30, 1995 to allow Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Unit 3 to continue to operate although it was not in compliance with License Condition 2.C.(5). The licensee had requested enforcement discretion in a letter dated August 30, 1995. The staff confirmed the oral NOED in writing in a letter dated September 1, 1995. The NOED was authorized until such time as the staff could disposition the licensee's request for a permanent change to License Condition 2.C.(5).

2.0 EVALUATION

License Condition 2.C.(5) of the Peach Bottom Unit 3 FOL states:

Operation beyond the end-of-cycle (all rods out condition) thermal power is limited to seventy (70) percent minimum. Increasing core power level via reduced feedwater heating, once operation in the coastdown mode has begun, is not permitted unless the licensee has performed an analysis of this operating condition that confirms that this condition is bounded by the analysis for the particular cycle of operation.

License Condition 2.C.(5) was incorporated into the Unit 3 FOL as part of License Amendment 62, dated October 24, 1979. The limits in License Condition 2.C.(5) were imposed by the staff and agreed to by the licensee at the time Amendment 62 was issued. In the safety evaluation which accompanied license Amendment 62, the staff stated:

The staff has observed that several BWR [boiling water reactor] licensees have stated in their reload applications that thermal power coastdown beyond EOC ARO [end-of-cycle all-rods-out] is permissible based on reference to Section 5.2 of the Generic Reload Fuel Application (NEDE-24011-P). Although several paragraphs on coastdown appear in the topical, the subject was never explicitly addressed in our SER [safety evaluation report] on the topical. However, we have been approving requests for coastdown operation via explicit plant-specific evaluations for core reloads. Our approvals have been limited to not less than 70% coastdown core power level which is the limit of our acceptance of the safety analyses generally referenced for such purposes. This 70% floor appears as a license condition for coastdown operation in our approvals.

Subsequent to the issuance of License Amendment 62, the NRC issued Amendment 155 to the Unit 3 license on May 21, 1990 which was consistent with the guidance in Generic Letter 88-16, "Removal of Cycle-Specific parameter Limits from Technical Specifications." Amendment 155 removed certain cycle-specific core parameter limits from the Technical Specifications (TSs) and replaced them with reference to a new document, called the Core Operating Limits Report (COLR) which would contain the values for those limits. Implementation of the COLR required the licensee to establish limits for the specified parameters using certain NRC-approved methodologies. Amendment 155 authorized the licensee to use the *latest approved version* of General Electric (GE) document NEDE-24011-P-A to establish the specified limits.

Although reactor power limits during coastdown operation is not one of the parameters discussed in the COLR, it is a parameter that is addressed in revisions of NEDE-24011-P-A that were issued subsequent to the issuance of Amendment 62. Section 4.3.2 of NEDE-24011-P-A, Revision 10, (February 1991) states that coastdown operation beyond full power is conservatively bounded by analyses at end-of cycle conditions. NEDE-24011-P-A, Revision 10 references a letter from R. Engel, GE, to T. Ippolito, NRC, dated September 1, 1981. In the September 1, 1981 letter, GE states that the above conclusion is confirmed for operation down to forty percent power during coastdown for all boiling water reactors. The NRC staff has approved amendments to NEDE-24011-P-A up through Amendment 22 which is incorporated in NEDE-24011-P-A, Revision 10. The NRC staff approval of Amendment 22 was issued on July 23, 1990 (A. Thadani, NRC, to J. Charnley, GE) and thus Revision 10 is the latest approved version of NEDE-24011-P-A.

The staff concludes that coastdown operation below the seventy percent limit established in Peach Bottom Unit 3 License Condition 2.C.(5) has been reviewed by the staff and is acceptable provided the licensee uses the approved versions of NEDE-24011-P-A as specified in the TSs. Therefore, the staff finds deletion of the coastdown restriction in FOL License Condition 2.C.(5) acceptable.

The staff reviewed the FOL License Condition 2.C.(5) restriction against increasing core power by reducing feedwater heating once coastdown operation

has begun. Consistent with the guidance in Generic Letter 88-16, the staff concludes that this restriction is more appropriately treated by the licensee on a cycle-specific basis using approved methodologies. The methodology for performing this evaluation is provided in NEDE-24011-P-A which has been approved by the staff as described above. The staff concludes that the deletion of the restrictions in FOL License Condition 2.C.(5) regarding feedwater heating, is acceptable.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Pennsylvania State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

4.0 EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES

The staff has reviewed the licensee's proposed amendment and finds (1) that exigent circumstances exist, as provided for in 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6), in that the licensee and the Commission must act quickly and that time does not permit the Commission to publish a Federal Register notice allowing 30 days for prior public comment, and (2) that the licensee has not failed to use its best efforts to make a timely application and avoid creating the exigent circumstance.

5.0 FINAL NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION

The Commission has provided standards for determining whether a significant hazards consideration exists (10 CFR 50.92(c)). A proposed amendment to an operating license for a facility involves no significant hazards consideration if 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; (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The licensee has analyzed the proposed amendment to determine if a significant hazard consideration exists:

- (1) The proposed change does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of any accident previously evaluated. Deletion of License Condition 2.C.(5) is an administrative change that will not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of any accident previously evaluated. This license condition is more appropriately controlled by other licensing bases documents, which include the NRC approved GESTAR II analyses and the cycle specific reload licensing reports, and should not be part of the FOL. Additionally, this FOL change will not alter any safety limits which ensure the integrity of fuel barriers,

and will not result in any increase to onsite or offsite dose.

No physical changes are being made to the plant, nor are there any changes being made in the operation of the plant as a result of this change which could involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of any accident previously evaluated. Additionally, this change will not alter the operation of equipment assumed to be available for the mitigation of accidents or transients.

(2) The proposed change does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated. Deletion of License Condition 2.C.(5) is an administrative change that will not create the possibility of a new or different type of accident from any previously evaluated. Deletion of License Condition 2.C.(5) is an administrative change that will not involve any changes to plant systems, structures or components (SCCs) which could act as new accident initiators. This change will not impact the manner in which SSCs are tested such that a new or different type of accident from any previously evaluated could be created.

(3) This proposed change does not result in a significant reduction in the margin of safety. No margins of safety are reduced as a result of the proposed deletion of License Condition 2.C.(5). No safety limits will be changed as a result of this change. The proposed change does not involve a reduction in the margin of safety because this change is an administrative change which will not impact core limits or any other parameters that are used in the mitigation of a UFSAR design basis accident or transient. The change to the FOL does not introduce any hardware changes, and will not alter the intended operation of plant structures, systems or components utilized in the mitigation of UFSAR design basis accidents or transients. Additionally, this change will not introduce any new failure modes of plant equipment not previously evaluated.

Based on the above considerations, the staff concludes that the amendment meets the standards set forth in 10 CFR 50.92 for a no significant hazards determination. Therefore, the staff has made a final determination that the proposed amendment involves no significant hazards consideration.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR

Part 20. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has made a final no significant hazards consideration determination. Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

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Date: October 17, 1995