

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
NOTICE OF FINAL FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. R-84
ARMED FORCES RADIOBIOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
DOCKET NO. 50-170

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an Amendment to Facility Operating License No. R-84 for the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute research and training reactor located at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

The amendment will renew the Operating License until November 8, 2000, in accordance with the licensee's application dated October 3, 1980, as supplemented. Opportunity for hearing was afforded by the Notice of Proposed Issuance published in the Federal Register on November 25, 1980 at 45 FR 78314. Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed renewal of the reactor Operating License is in accordance with the licensee's application for renewal dated October 3, 1980, as supplemented. The amendment would renew the Operating License of the reactor until November 8, 2000.

Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed renewal is required because the existing Operating License has expired, and the licensee has made a timely request for authorization to continue operating the reactor.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would authorize the licensee to continue operating the reactor in the same manner that it has been operated since 1962. The environmental impacts associated with the continued operation of the AFRRRI facility are discussed in an Environmental Impact Appraisal dated January 1982. The appraisal concluded that continued operation of the AFRRRI reactor for an additional 20 years will not result in any significant environmental impacts on air, water, land or biota in the area, and that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared. These conclusions were based on the following:

- a) normal routine releases of radioactive effluents from the facility are well within the guidelines of 10 CFR Part 20 for unrestricted areas;
- b) at licensed steady state power level, the inventory of fission products in the fuel cannot generate sufficient radioactive decay heat to cause fuel damage even in the hypothetical event of rapid total loss of coolant; and
- c) the hypothetical loss of integrity of the cladding of the maximum irradiated fuel rod will not lead to radiation exposures in the unrestricted environment that exceed the guidelines of 10 CFR Part 20.

In addition, continued operation will not require alteration of buildings or structures, will not lead to changes in effluents released from the facility to the environment, will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, and will not involve any unresolved issues concerning alternative uses of available resources. Based on the foregoing and on the Environmental Impact Appraisal, the Commission concludes that renewal of the license will not result in any significant environmental impacts.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As required by Section 102(2)(E) of NEPA (42 U.S.C.A. §4332(2)(E)), the staff has considered possible alternatives to the proposed action, including cessation of operation of the reactor and has concluded that, from the standpoint of environmental impact, there are no appropriate alternatives to the proposed action.

Agencies or Persons Consulted

The NRC staff obtained technical assistance from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in reviewing the licensee's application for renewal.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the Environmental Impact Appraisal, the staff concluded that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the Commission has determined not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed action.

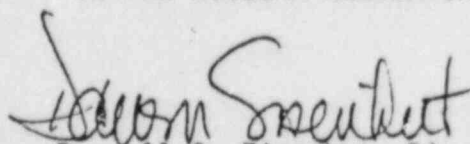
For further details with respect to this proposed action, see the application for license renewal dated October 3, 1980, as supplemented, the Environmental Impact Appraisal, the Safety Evaluation Report prepared by the staff (NRC-EG-0882), and Supplement 1 to the Safety Evaluation Report.

The Environmental Impact Appraisal is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, NW, Washington, D. C. 20555. A copy may be obtained upon request addressed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, ATTENTION: Director, Division of Licensing.

Copies of NUREG-0882 and Supplement 1 to NUREG-0882 may be purchased by calling (301) 492-9530 or by writing to the Publication Services Section, Document Management Branch, Division of Technical Information and Document Control, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D. C. 20555; or purchased from the National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia 22161.

Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this 27 day of July 1984.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


Darrell G. Eisenhut, Director
Division of Licensing

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Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Darrell G. Eisenhut, Director
Division of Licensing

*SEE PREVIOUS PAGE FOR CONCURRENCES (RETYPE 7/10/84)

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SSPB:DL
*PAnderson:kab
07/03/84

SSPB:DL
*RCarter
07/03/84

SSPB:DL
*HBerkow
07/03/84

SSPB:DL
*CThomas
07/03/84

OELD
*MKarman
07/05/84

AD *DL*
DCrutchfield
07/24/84

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Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

*SEE PREVIOUS PAGE FOR CONCURRENCES (RETYPED 7/10/84)

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Harold R. Denton, Director
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