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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NOS. 39 AND 30 TO

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NOS. NPF-76 AND NPF-80

HOUSTON LIGHTING & POWER COMPANY

CITY PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OF SAN ANTONIO

CENTRAL POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

DOCKET NOS. 50-498 AND 50-499

SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By application dated August 30, 1991, Houston Lighting & Power Company, et.al., (the licensee) requested changes to the Technical Specifications (Appendix A to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-76 and NPF-80) for the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2. The proposed changes would clarify sections of the axial flux difference (AFD) and incore moveable detection system specifications. The licensee's January 24, 1992, letter requested a 10-day implementation period following the date of issuance of the license amendments.

The text of the AFD specification has been rewritten to provide clearer direction without changing the function of the specification. The Surveillance Requirements for this specification have also been changed. The current specification requires 24 hours of AFD monitor alarm monitoring when the AFD Monitor Alarm is returned to operable status. The proposed change would eliminate this requirement.

The second change clarifies the operability requirements for the incore Moveable Detection System in the unique circumstance that only the four symmetric thimble pairs are used to verify the quadrant power tilt ratio (QPTR) above 75 percent power. The QPTR specifications make allowance for using these eight unique thimbles, but the flux mapping system operability specification requires 75 percent of the incore flux thimbles be available before the system can be used for QPTR measurement. The proposed change makes it clear that the eight thimbles to be used to monitor the QPTR can be used without accessing the rest of the incore thimbles.

2.0 EVALUATION

The proposed changes to the AFD specifications are much easier to read and understand. They should eliminate interpretation difficulties and do not change the function of the specification. The current specification required 24 hours of AFD monitor alarm monitoring when the AFD monitor alarm is returned to operable status. The monitor alarm is often lost due to a process computer shutdown and the monitor alarm is returned to operable status within a few minutes. Currently, a 24-hour log must then be kept. Since the return to operability of the monitor alarm includes verification of it and updating of any penalty time accumulated, the 24 hour monitoring is redundant and unnecessary.

The QPTR must be determined to be within the limit at least once every 7 days when the alarm is operable and at least once per 12 hours when the alarm is inoperable. In addition, when one Power Range channel is inoperable the QPTR must be determined at least once every 12 hours. In the latter case, it may be determined using the movable incore detection system subject to the requirements of Specification 3.3.3.2 or it may be determined using the four pairs of symmetric thimbles. The present specification does not state whether the requirements of Specification 3.3.3.2, namely that 75 percent of the thimble locations are accessible must be followed if the four pairs of symmetric thimbles are used. The proposed change will state that Specification 3.3.3.2 does not apply when the four pairs of symmetric locations option is being used. The use of the four pairs of symmetric thimble locations as allowed by Specification 4.2.4.2.a and discussed in the associated Bases is sufficient to verify equipment performance and is an alternative to the use of the full incore flux map method of Specification 4.2.4.2.b. The added note which states that Specification 3.3.3.2, requiring 75 percent of the thimbles be available, is not applicable clarifies the existing requirements. Therefore, the proposed change is acceptable.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

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

4.0 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 and changes surveillance requirements. 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 previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (56 FR 51926).

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.

5.0 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: August 18, 1992