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

February 15, 1996

DOCKET NO: 70-1113

LICENSEE: General Electric Company (GE)
Wilmington, North Carolina

SUBJECT: SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT: AMENDMENT APPLICATION DATED JANUARY 16, 1996, TRANSFER TEST QUANTITIES OF HF ACID

BACKGROUND

By letter dated January 16, 1996, GE submitted an amendment application to add Section 1.8.16 to Part I of Materials License SNM-1097. Section 1.8.16 authorizes the transfer of test quantities of hydrofluoric acid (HF), containing trace amounts of uranium, to vendors for their evaluation of potential usage. The HF concentrations are not to exceed 3 PPM uranium with enrichments not to exceed 6 percent U-235. GE was given similar authority by Amendment No. 25 dated October 7, 1992, to transfer calcium fluoride containing trace amounts of uranium to vendors for testing. Amendment No. 26 added Section 1.8.14 to Part I of SNM-1097.

DISCUSSION

GE proposes to ship test quantities of HF to potential buyers for testing without continuing NRC controls. GE is replacing their current ADU (wet) conversion process with a dry conversion process. A byproduct of the dry process is the production of nominal 50 percent HF. The HF is fairly pure and contains only traces of uranium averaging approximately 0.1 PPM. The purity and concentration of this byproduct makes it attractive for a number of industrial uses.

At the authorized concentration limit of 3 PPM uranium and enrichment limit of 6 percent U-235, the HF contains less than 30 pCi of uranium per gram. The HF meets Option 1 of the Branch Technical Position for the disposal of uranium and thorium wastes, the cutoff level that allows disposal in an unrestricted manner. In addition, the material is not intended to be consumed by humans nor used in products used on or in the body or in the food chain.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The NRC has reviewed the proposed new section to Part I and has determined that the added section does not adversely affect the public health and safety or the environment. Concentrations of the HF are below the 30 pCi/gm limit specified for unrestricted use in Option 1 of the Branch Technical Position. The HF is not intended to be consumed by humans nor used in products used on or in the body or in the food chain. Therefore, the NRC has concluded that the following conditions have been met:

1. There is no significant change in the type or significant increase in the amount of any effluents that may be released offsite,

2. There is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure,

3. There is no significant construction impact, and

4. There is no significant increase in the potential for or consequences from radiological accidents.

Accordingly, the NRC has determined that the criteria in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(11) for categorically excluding an action from an environmental review has been met. Therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is necessary for this proposed action.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, the staff has concluded that adding Section 1.8.16 to Part I of the SNM-1097 is acceptable in that it will not result in an adverse impact to humans or the environment. The licensing action meets the requirements of 10 CFR 51.22(c)(11) for categorical exclusion from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment. Therefore, Condition S-1 has been revised to include the date of January 16, 1996 and Condition S-2 has been revised to include Section 1.8.16.

The Region II inspection staff has no objection to this proposed action.

Principal Contributor
Keith K. McDaniel