

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20545

F. L. Johnston

OCT 31 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: William V. Johnston, Assistant Director
Materials, Chemical & Environmental Technology
Division of Engineering

THRU: Victor Benaroya, Chief *WB*
Chemical Engineering Branch
Division of Engineering

FROM: Robert L. Ferguson, Section Leader
Fire Protection Section
Chemical Engineering Branch
Division of Engineering

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL LICENSING PROBLEMS - BYRON STATION UNITS 1 & 2
(50-454/455)

During our site audit, on July 12 to 15, 1983, we identified several concerns with the applicant's implementation of our fire protection guidelines. Two of these, the protection for safe shutdown capability in certain areas and the protection of structural steel associated with fire barriers may not be resolved promptly and the needed modifications may not be implemented prior to fuel load, or even 5% power.

By letter dated September 20, 1983, the applicant indicated that it did not share our concern on these two issues. Subsequently, we held a meeting on October 28, 1983.

At this meeting, the applicant presented general arguments for his positions. The applicant stated that the cable used at Byron had passed the IEEE-383 test, met the separation criteria of Reg. Guide 1.75, and with the administrative procedures in effect, are not expected to burn. Therefore, the lack of separation and the absence of a suppression system as required by Appendix R would not pose a safety problem. Because in the applicant's opinion an equivalent level of fire protection as required by our guidelines were provided, the applicant had not asked and was not planning on asking for approval of these deviations from our guidelines. The applicant also stated that they did not have a complete list of all areas which do not meet our guidelines. We informed them that to meet our guidelines, specific deviations would have to be requested for each fire area that does not meet our guidelines; however, based on the site audit, we were of the opinion that the areas visited were not acceptable without some modifications. Two approaches to resolve these issues are being considered by the applicant (1) technical meetings with the reviewer to work out acceptable fire protection and (2) appeal to higher level management. The applicant said that we will be informed by November 4, 1983 as to the approach they will take.

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We believe that it will take a considerable effort on the applicant's part to identify all the areas which do not meet our guidelines, develop an acceptable level of fire protection for each of these areas and install the necessary equipment by fuel load, scheduled for February 1984. To date we have not had the full cooperation of the applicant to implement a fire protection program consistent with our guidelines. We recommend high level management involvement now.

Robert L. Ferguson, Section Leader
Fire Protection Section
Chemical Engineering Branch
Division of Engineering

cc: R. Vollmer
R. Ferguson
T. Wambach
R. Eberly
S. Pawlicki
T. Sullivan
O. Parr
J. Wermiel
J. Taylor
C. Norelius, Region III
D. Eisenhut
V. Benaroya
T. Novak
B. J. Youngblood
L. Olshan
F. Rosa
M. Srinivasan
R. Wessman
R. Barnes (GBA)