



U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

DRAFT REGULATORY GUIDE DG-1461

Proposed Revision 1 to Regulatory Guide 1.237

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GUIDANCE FOR CHANGES DURING CONSTRUCTION FOR NEW NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS BEING CONSTRUCTED UNDER A COMBINED LICENSE REFERENCING A CERTIFIED DESIGN UNDER 10 CFR PART 52

A. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This regulatory guide (RG) describes a process that the staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) considers acceptable for implementation of changes to the design of structures, systems, and components (SSCs) of a facility being constructed under a combined license (COL) covered by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), Part 52, “Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants” (Ref. 1), Section 52.98, “Finality of combined licenses; information requests.” Section 52.98(c) covers COLs that reference a certified design. Specifically, this RG addresses the timing of a proposed change to the design of facility SSCs during construction, as the facility design is described in the final safety analysis report (FSAR), as updated, and for which a license amendment or exemption is required by an applicable change process of 10 CFR Part 50, “Domestic Licensing of Production and Utilization Facilities” (Ref. 2), or Part 52.

Applicability

This RG applies to holders of COLs that reference a certified design issued under 10 CFR Part 52.

Applicable Regulations

- 10 CFR Part 50 discusses the change processes applicable to information in an FSAR, as updated, for a COL for changes that are not controlled by a design certification rule (i.e., an appendix to 10 CFR Part 52).
 - 10 CFR 50.59, “Changes, tests and, experiments,” governs changes to the facility as described in the FSAR, as updated, for a COL issued under 10 CFR Part 52 for changes that are outside the scope of a design certification rule.

This RG is being issued in draft form to involve the public in the development of regulatory guidance in this area. It has not received final staff review or approval and does not represent an NRC final staff position. Public comments are being solicited on this DG and its associated regulatory analysis. Comments should be accompanied by appropriate supporting data. Comments may be submitted through the Federal rulemaking website, <http://www.regulations.gov>, by searching for draft regulatory guide DG-1461. Alternatively, comments may be submitted to Office of the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Comments must be submitted by the date indicated in the *Federal Register* notice.

Electronic copies of this DG, previous versions of DGs, and other recently issued guides are available through the NRC’s public website under the Regulatory Guides document collection of the NRC Library at <https://nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/reg-guides>. The DG is also available through the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>, under Accession No. ML25258A248. The regulatory analysis is associated with a rulemaking and may be found in ADAMS under Accession No. ML26181A099.

- 10 CFR 50.90, “Application for amendment of license, construction permit, or early site permit,” requires that a COL holder under 10 CFR Part 52 who desires to amend the license must file an application for a license amendment with the Commission fully describing the changes desired and following, as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications.
- 10 CFR 52.98, governs changes to and departures from the design of a facility, as described in the FSAR, as updated, for a facility licensed under 10 CFR Part 52.
 - 10 CFR 52.98(c)(1) states that, for a COL for a facility that references a certified design, changes to and departures from information within the scope of a certified design are governed by the requirements of the applicable design certification rule.
 - 10 CFR 52.98(c)(2) states that, for a COL for a facility that references a certified design, changes that are outside the scope of the design certification are governed by the applicable change processes in 10 CFR Part 50 unless they also involve changes to or noncompliance with information within the scope of the referenced design certification rule, in which case the changes are governed by 10 CFR 52.98(c)(1).
- 10 CFR Part 52, Appendices A, D, E, F, and G certify standard designs
 - Section II.D of each appendix defines Tier 1 of the generic design control document (DCD) for the certified design. It identifies the specific sections within the generic DCD that contains the information regarding definitions and general provisions, significant site parameters, and significant interface requirements. Section II.D lists the specific tables in the generic DCD containing information on inspections, tests, analyses, and acceptance criteria (ITAAC). Finally, Section II.D lists the sections containing design description information and states that design descriptions includes any figures and non-ITAAC tables referenced in those sections.
 - Section II.E of each appendix defines Tier 2 of the generic DCD for the certified design, states that compliance with Tier 2 is required, and states that Section VIII governs generic changes to and plant-specific departures from Tier 2.
 - Section III.B of each appendix requires that each licensee referencing the appendix comply with the requirements of Tier 1 and Tier 2, except as otherwise provided in the appendix.
 - Section VIII of each appendix includes requirements for changes to and departures from the information in the DCD for the certified design, or for a facility for which a COL has been issued, the plant-specific DCD portion of the FSAR, as updated, for that facility.
- 10 CFR 52.99, “Inspection during construction; ITAAC schedules and notifications; NRC notices,” requires, in part, that a combined license holder notify the NRC that prescribed inspections, tests, and analyses have been completed and the prescribed acceptance criteria are met. A change to a facility during construction pursuant to a COL may affect a licensee’s reporting obligations.

Related Guidance

- RG 1.181, “Content of the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report in Accordance with 10 CFR 50.71(e)” (Ref. 3), provides guidance on updates to FSARs.
- RG 1.187, “Guidance for Implementation of 10 CFR 50.59, Changes, Tests, and Experiments” (Ref. 4), provides guidance that the NRC staff considers acceptable for use when licensees evaluate proposed changes to the facility as described in the FSAR, as updated.
- RG 1.206, “Applications for Nuclear Power Plants” (Ref. 5), provides guidance on the format and content of applications for light water reactors submitted under 10 CFR Part 52.
- RG 1.215, “Guidance for ITAAC Closure Under 10 CFR Part 52” (Ref. 6), provides guidance on the closure of ITAAC under 10 CFR Part 52.
- RG 1.28, “Quality Assurance Program Criteria (Design and Construction)” (Ref. 7), provides guidance on both Part 1 and Part 2 of American Society of Mechanical Engineers standard NQA-1.
- NUREG-0800, “Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Plants: LWR Edition” (Ref. 8), provides guidance to the NRC staff for performing safety reviews of applications to construct or operate nuclear power plants under 10 CFR Part 50 and 10 CFR Part 52.
- Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) COL-ISG-025, “Interim Staff Guidance on Changes during Construction under 10 CFR Part 52” (Ref. 9), provides guidance to the NRC staff on the preliminary amendment request (PAR) review process available to 10 CFR Part 52 combined license holders as an elective precursor to a license amendment or exemption request.
- NEI 96-07, Appendix C, Revision 0 - Corrected, “Guideline for Implementation of Change Control Processes for New Nuclear Power Plants Licensed under 10 CFR Part 52,” dated March 2014 (Ref. 10). NRC Letter to NEI Russell J. Bell, “Acceptance for Endorsement of Nuclear Energy Institute 96-07, Appendix C, Revision 0 - Corrected: Guideline for Implementation of Change Control Processes for New Nuclear Power Plants Licensed Under 10 CFR Part 52,” dated July 2, 2014 (Ref. 11), states that NRC finds NEI 96-07, Appendix C, “acceptable for use by licensees during formal NRC endorsement via the NRC’s regulatory guide process.”

Purpose of Regulatory Guides

The NRC issues RGs to describe to the public methods that the staff considers acceptable for use in implementing specific parts of the agency’s regulations, to explain techniques that the staff uses in evaluating specific problems or postulated events, and to provide guidance to applicants. Regulatory guides are not substitutes for regulations, and compliance with them is not required. Methods and solutions that differ from those set forth in RGs will be deemed acceptable if they provide a basis for the findings required for the issuance or continuance of a permit or license by the Commission.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This RG provides voluntary guidance for implementing the mandatory information collections in 10 CFR Parts 50 and 52 that are subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et. seq.). These information collections were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), under control numbers 3150-0011 and 3150-0151, respectively. Send comments regarding this information collection to the FOIA, Library, and Information Collections Branch, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Mail Stop: T6-A10M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001 or by e-mail to Infocollects.Resource@nrc.gov, and to the OMB reviewer at: OMB Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (3150-0011 and 3150-0151), Attn: Desk Officer for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503.

Public Protection Notification

The NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the document requesting or requiring the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

B. DISCUSSION

Reasons for Revision

On May 23, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order (E.O.) 14300, “Ordering the Reform of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission” (Ref. 12). Section 5, “Reforming and Modernizing the NRC’s Regulations,” requires the NRC to undertake a review and wholesale revision of its regulations and guidance documents as guided by the policies set forth in section 2 of the E.O. This RG addresses section 5(f), which requires the NRC to “[e]stablish stringent thresholds for circumstances in which the NRC may demand changes to reactor design once construction is underway.”

Background

In the 1997 design certification rulemaking for the U.S. Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (ABWR) (Ref. 13), the Commission stated that it modeled 10 CFR Part 52, Appendix A, “Design Certification Rule for the U.S. Advanced Boiling Water Reactor,” Section VIII.B.5, on 10 CFR 50.59. Both provisions then allowed a licensee to make changes to the design of its facility as described in the FSAR “without prior NRC approval” provided specified criteria are met. Section 50.59 governs “changes to a facility as described in the FSAR,” while Section VIII.B.5 of each design certification appendix to Part 52 governs “[departures] from Tier 2 information.” Tier 2 is the portion of the design-related information in the generic DCD that is approved but not certified by each design certification rule. In general, the information in Tier 2 is equivalent to the corresponding information in an FSAR for a facility licensed under Part 50. If a proposed departure from Tier 2 required an amendment, however, then the licensee would be required to obtain NRC approval through the appropriate process set forth in the appendix before implementing the proposed departure. This position reflects the status of Tier 2 as a set of requirements, as stated in Sections II.E and III.B of each design certification appendix. The text of Section VIII.B.5 of the design certification appendices issued in the 1990s was similar to 10 CFR 50.59 until the NRC amended 10 CFR 50.59 in 1999 (Ref. 14).

The NRC intended the 1999 amendments to 10 CFR 50.59 to clarify the applicable requirements for a licensee of a facility licensed under Part 50 to determine whether a license amendment was required or not. As relevant here, the 1999 version of the rule deleted the phrase “without prior NRC approval” from the former 10 CFR 50.59(a) and replaced it with “without obtaining a license amendment pursuant to 10 CFR 50.90” in the new 10 CFR 50.59(c)(1). In the 1999 rule, however, the NRC did not modify the provisions of Section VIII in the appendices to 10 CFR Part 52.

One comment on the 10 CFR 50.59 rulemaking in 1999 concerned the requirement to obtain a license amendment before implementing a change that involves a change to a technical specification (TS) or meets one of the criteria in 10 CFR 50.59(c)(2). In response to the comment in the Statements of Consideration for the 1999 10 CFR 50.59 final rule, the Commission discussed the timing of “implementation” of a change to the facility under 10 CFR 50.59 vis-à-vis the issuance of an amendment authorizing the proposed change. The Commission stated that a holder of an operating license may install and test a change requiring an amendment under 10 CFR 50.59(c)(2) before the amendment is granted, provided that such installation and testing of the change does not violate a TS or otherwise meet one of the 10 CFR 50.59(c)(2) criteria for prior approval. The Commission stated that it did not consider the design change “implemented” until the licensee used the re-designed SSC in facility operations, and that the licensee could do this only if the NRC had already granted an amendment authorizing use of the SSC as redesigned. In addition, the Commission clarified that such installation and testing of a change before receiving NRC approval is at the licensee’s own risk. This means that if the Commission did not grant the

requested amendment, the licensee must modify the facility to conform to the description in the FSAR, as updated, before resuming operation of the SSC.

The Commission did not amend 10 CFR Part 52 in 1999 to conform to the 1999 amendments to 10 CFR 50.59 because the Commission anticipated other future rule changes for 10 CFR Part 52 based on an ongoing lessons-learned review. The Commission stated that it would consider proposed changes to 10 CFR Part 52, including the “implementation” of changes subject to amendments, in an integrated fashion. The Commission did modify the Section VIII.B.5 “50.59-like change process” in the 2006 AP1000 design certification rule (10 CFR Part 52, Appendix D, “Design Certification Rule for the AP1000 Design”) (Ref. 15) to replace the term “unreviewed safety question” with the more specific criteria specified in the 1999 rulemaking to replace that term in 10 CFR 50.59. While not relevant to this discussion, the AP1000 design certification rule also defined a new term, “change to a method of evaluation,” consistent with the corresponding changes in the 1999 10 CFR 50.59 rule.

In 2007, the Commission amended 10 CFR Part 52, including amendments to Section VIII.B.5 in each design certification appendix to incorporate the same changes included in the AP1000 design certification rule (Ref. 16). However, the 2007 10 CFR Part 52 comprehensive amendment left Section VIII.B.5.a in each 10 CFR Part 52 appendix certifying a standard design unchanged. Specifically, section VIII.B.5.a of each such 10 CFR Part 52 appendix continues to include the phrase “without prior NRC approval,” which differs from the new text added to 10 CFR 50.59(c)(1) and (2) in 1999 quoted above with respect to implementation. This unchanged text in Section VIII.B.5.a of each 10 CFR Part 52 appendix certifying a standard design is consistent with the Commission’s position stated in the 1997 ABWR design certification rulemaking cited above.

In July 2015, the NRC issued COL-ISG-025 to provide guidance on the use of a PAR process available to combined license holders through a license condition included in every COL issued as of May 5, 2020, the date of issuance of draft guide DG-1321 for public comment (Ref. 17). The PAR process is an elective process by which a combined license holder can opt to submit a request to the NRC seeking a determination on whether the NRC objects to the licensee proceeding with construction changes, subject to strict conditions, before the agency completes its review of the associated license amendment and any associated exemption request from the certification information for a construction change. COL-ISG-025 explained that changes to the facility that required a license amendment and any associated exemption from certification information would require an NRC determination of “No Objection” to the PAR before the construction of the plant change or modification. (The staff notes that a proposed change to inspections, tests, analyses, and acceptance criteria (ITAAC), which are part of Tier 1, required an amendment pursuant to 10 CFR 52.98(f) and an exemption under Section VIII.A and 10 CFR 52.63(b). The exemption had to meet the standards set forth in 10 CFR 52.7.) However, a “No Objection” finding does not imply preapproval of the associated license amendment and (if applicable) exemption request. The PAR process allows for at-risk construction pending NRC review and approval of the required license amendment and any associated exemption from the certification information.

On October 23, 2018, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) submitted a letter (Ref. 18) requesting that the NRC consider clarifying the requirements for the timing of changes during construction of a facility pursuant to a COL. While the NRC recognizes that additional flexibility during construction may also come at the cost of reduced regulatory stability, the NRC staff has determined that additional flexibility for changes during construction pursuant to a COL is justified. Accordingly, Revision 0 of this RG clarified the timing of when a licensee may begin construction of facility SSCs pursuant to a COL that references a certified design in accordance with a change to or departure from the design of the facility as described in the FSAR, as updated, including Tier 2 of the plant-specific DCD.

In 2026, the Commission amended 10 CFR Part 52 to revise the change control processes described in Section VIII of the certified designs in Appendices A, D, E, F, and G to (1) apply the 50.59-like process to determine if departures from Tier 1 design description information require an exemption request, (2) require a license amendment only for any revisions to the inspections, tests, and analyses (ITA) and acceptance criteria (AC) information in any ITAAC; and (3) ensure the 50.59-like process addresses all severe accident design features. These changes also revised Appendix D of 10 CFR Part 52 to allow the use of the 50-59-like process to determine if departures from Tier 2* information require prior NRC approval.

Basis for the Changes in Guidance

As explained above and in the final Statements of Consideration for the 1999 rule amending 10 CFR 50.59, for operating plant licenses issued under 10 CFR Part 50, “implementation” of a change to the design of an SSC described in the FSAR begins when the licensee uses the SSC in facility operations. Installation and testing of the SSC, as changed, is not considered “implementation” unless the installation or testing itself would violate a TS or would require an amendment under the criteria of 10 CFR 50.59(c)(2). The NRC staff has determined that a licensee may construct or implement changes to an SSC in a plant under construction under a COL that references a certified design before the NRC has made a final determination on a license amendment subject to specified limitations, similar to the installation and testing of a change to an SSC in an operating plant under Part 50. Before a licensee may declare a changed SSC operable or place it in service, the licensee must obtain all required amendments pertaining to the change. For plants under construction under 10 CFR Part 52, the determination comparable to placing the SSC in use in facility operations (“operability” for SSCs controlled by TS) for a 10 CFR Part 50 facility occurs when the licensee notifies the NRC pursuant to 10 CFR 52.99(c)(1) that the prescribed inspections, tests, and analyses for that SSC have been performed and that the prescribed acceptance criteria have been met. Similar to an operating facility in which a system is not operable while it is out of service for maintenance and testing, there are no immediate nuclear safety consequences for a new facility if facility construction has not been completed and fuel has not been loaded. Given the lack of safety consequences, the NRC has determined to allow licensees to construct SSCs in accordance with changes to the design described in the FSAR, as updated, subject to 10 CFR 52.98(c)(2), or departures from Tier 1 design descriptions, Tier 2 and Tier 2*, subject to 10 CFR 52.98(c)(1) for which the licensee has sought or will seek the appropriate amendment or exemption from the NRC.

Under this guidance, such construction will be subject to certain conditions that the licensee must satisfy before it submits the ITAAC notification letter for the SSC to the NRC under 10 CFR 52.99(c)(1) or 10 CFR 52.99(c)(2). This would be consistent with current practice for operating plants, under which licensees may install and test modifications (e.g., during an outage) in parallel with NRC review of required license amendment requests. Before a 10 CFR Part 52 licensee constructing a facility declares an ITAAC complete by submitting an ITAAC closure notice, the design of the SSCs required to meet that ITAAC must be consistent with the design described in the FSAR, as updated, as well as the Tier 1 design descriptions and Tier 2 information in the plant-specific DCD. Licensee configuration management programs ensure that changes are properly controlled. The configuration management programs, along with inspections and the ITAAC process itself, provide assurance that the plant is constructed in accordance with the license.

Through the NRC’s Construction Inspection Program (CIP), the NRC staff uses inspections of construction activities to independently verify that the licensee successfully carries out construction activities and identifies and corrects deficiencies that may have an impact on the ITAAC or other construction activities. The staff implements the CIP through Inspection Manual Chapter 2503, “Construction Inspection Program: Inspections of Inspections, Tests, Analyses and Acceptance Criteria

(ITAAC) Related Work” (Ref. 19). The results of the CIP are an essential part of the basis for a staff determination, in accordance with 10 CFR 52.103(g), that the acceptance criteria have been met. CIP activities can continue while a licensee is constructing SSCs whose design departs from the FSAR, as updated including Tier 1 design descriptions. If the inspection program identifies an SSC that does not match the design described in the FSAR as updated, including Tier 1 design descriptions, which would otherwise have been reported as a construction finding, the NRC staff will consider the as-found condition of the SSC in connection with pending license amendments, pending exemption requests, requests for new amendments, requests for new exemptions and changes to or departures from SSC designs made without NRC approval in accordance with the change processes in Section VIII of the appendices to 10 CFR Part 52 or 10 CFR 50.59.

The foregoing background and discussion applies to the design of a facility described in an FSAR, as updated, including Tier 2, Tier 2*, as well as Tier 1 design description information. The rationale set forth in the final Statements of Consideration for the 1999 rule amending 10 CFR 50.59 for the Commission’s position with respect to operating plants applies to changes requiring amendments governed by 10 CFR 50.59, which corresponds to the change process in Sections VIII.B for Tier 2 and Tier 2* and Section VIII.A for Tier 1 design description information. Therefore, a licensee may employ the PAR process for both Tier 1 design description information and Tier 2 information as described in COL-ISG-025 if the facility license includes that condition.

Consideration of International Standards

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) works with member states and other partners to promote the safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear technologies. The IAEA develops Safety Standards and Safety Guides for protecting people and the environment from harmful effects of ionizing radiation. This system of safety fundamentals, safety requirements, safety guides, and other relevant reports reflects an international perspective on what constitutes a high level of safety. To inform its development of this RG, the NRC considered IAEA Safety Requirements and Safety Guides¹ pursuant to the Commission’s International Policy Statement (Ref. 20) and Management Directive and Handbook 6.6 (Ref. 21). In development of this RG, the staff considered IAEA Safety Guide NS-G-2.3, “Modifications to Nuclear Power Plants,” issued October 2001 (Ref. 22).

¹ IAEA Safety Requirements and Guides may be found at www.iaea.org/ or by writing the International Atomic Energy Agency, P.O. Box 100 Wagramer Strasse 5, A-1400 Vienna, Austria; telephone (+431) 2600-0; fax (+431) 2600-7; or e-mail Official.Mail@IAEA.Org. It should be noted that some of the international recommendations do not correspond to the requirements specified in the NRC’s regulations, and the NRC’s requirements take precedence over the international guidance.

C. STAFF REGULATORY GUIDANCE

Under 10 CFR 52.98(c), changes to or departures from the design of a facility under construction pursuant to a COL as described in the facility FSAR, as updated, including Tier 2 and Tier 2*, are subject to the applicable change processes in Part 50 or the referenced design certification rule, in accordance with 10 CFR 52.98(c)(2) and (1), respectively. For the staff's positions articulated below, Tier 2 includes Tier 2*. If the applicable change process requires an amendment to authorize the change or departure, any such amendment is treated in accordance with 10 CFR 50.90. If the applicable change process requires an exemption to authorize the change or departure, any exemption is governed by the requirements in 10 CFR 52.63(b)(1). Further, 10 CFR 52.99 requires a licensee to notify the NRC that prescribed inspections, tests, and analyses have been performed, and that prescribed acceptance criteria are met. The staff considers the following acceptable for construction of a facility pursuant to a COL to comply with the design described in Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the plant-specific DCD and to comply with the notification requirements of 10 CFR 52.99:

1. If the applicable change process requires a license amendment or exemption, a combined license holder may construct an SSC in accordance with a change to the facility described in the FSAR, as updated, for a COL covered by 10 CFR 52.98(c)(2) or a departure from Tier 1 design descriptions or Tier 2 of the plant-specific DCD for a COL covered by 10 CFR 52.98(c)(1), without first obtaining a license amendment or exemption, provided that the following conditions are satisfied:
 - a. A licensee must submit the request for a license amendment or exemption required to authorize the change to the TS or the facility or departure from Tier 1 design descriptions or Tier 2 of the plant-specific DCD within 45 days after the licensee approves the design of an SSC as changed and begins construction of the SSC. Submission of a license amendment request or exemption request on this schedule would allow for time sufficient to process the license amendment request or exemption request so that the ITAAC findings and fuel load are not delayed.
 - b. Under this process, a licensee is not permitted to begin construction in accordance with a change to the TS or the design as described in the FSAR, as updated, or a design that departs from Tier 1 design descriptions or Tier 2 unless the SSC under construction is located within the restricted area defined in 10 CFR Part 20 and described in the FSAR, as updated. This ensures that the change qualifies for a categorical exclusion and NRC environmental review is not necessary.
 - c. If the NRC does not approve a request for a license amendment or exemption as submitted, the licensee is obligated to construct the facility in accordance with the design described in the FSAR, as updated, including the plant-specific DCD. In other words, proceeding with the change before receiving NRC approval is at the licensee's own risk.
 - d. In order to meet the above conditions, the licensee must determine whether a proposed change to the design of the facility as described in the FSAR or a departure from the plant-specific DCD requires an amendment or exemption before initiating construction. This is necessary to determine whether the departure affects Tier 1, including the ITAAC. If the departure affects Tier 1, including the ITAAC, the licensee may use the PAR process.
2. In order to ensure that a change to a facility or departure from Tier 2 that requires an amendment or a departure from Tier 1 design descriptions that require an exemption does not alter the basis

for the acceptability of an ITAAC, and to ensure that the facility design described in Tier 2, as changed, is an acceptable method for complying with Tier 1, a licensee may not submit a 10 CFR 52.99(c)(1) ITAAC closure notification for an SSC subject to such a change or departure unless the NRC has evaluated and approved the change to or departure from the design of the SSC subject to the ITAAC under the applicable change process.

3. Although all COLs issued as of the date of this RG include a license condition authorizing PARs, a licensee has the option to use the guidance provided in this RG (and the provisions of its license condition) for a change to or departure from the design of the facility that requires a license amendment or exemption from Tier 1 design description information.
4. For purposes of this RG, “implementation” of a change to the FSAR, as updated, or a departure from the plant-specific DCD during construction of a facility under a COL that references a certified design refers to when the licensee submits a notification under 10 CFR 52.99(c)(1) or 10 CFR 52.99(c)(2) that applies to the affected SSC.
5. A licensee may voluntarily adopt the process described in Items 1 and 2 above. To voluntarily adopt this process, a licensee should propose a license condition that implements the conditions in Items 1 and 2 above and propose exemptions from the provisions of sections II.E and III.B of the Part 52 design certification appendix referenced in the COL that require compliance with Tier 1 and Tier 2. When construction begins, the licensee is encouraged to inform the NRC of the planned request for a license amendment or exemption request (or the current status of its evaluation). The NRC encourages discussions between the licensee and NRC staff members about future licensing action requests before submission to allow sufficient exchange of information on technical information, schedules, and resource planning.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

Licensees generally are not required to comply with the guidance in this regulatory guide. If the NRC proposes to use this regulatory guide in an action that would constitute backfitting, as that term is defined in 10 CFR 50.109, “Backfitting,” and as described in NRC Management Directive 8.4, “Management of Backfitting, Forward Fitting, Issue Finality, and Information Requests” (Ref. 23); affect the issue finality of an approval issued under 10 CFR Part 52, “Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants”; or constitute forward fitting, as that term is defined in Management Directive 8.4, then the NRC staff will apply the applicable policy in Management Directive 8.4 to justify the action. If a licensee believes that the NRC is using this regulatory guide in a manner inconsistent with the discussion in this Implementation section, then the licensee may inform the NRC staff in accordance with Management Directive 8.4.

REFERENCES²

1. *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), “Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants,” Part 52, Chapter 1, Title 10, “Energy.”
2. 10 CFR Part 50, “Domestic Licensing of Production and Utilization Facilities.”
3. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.181, “Content of the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report in Accordance with 10 CFR 50.71(e),” Washington, DC.
4. NRC, RG 1.187, “Guidance for Implementation of 10 CFR 50.59, Changes, Tests, and Experiments,” Washington, DC.
5. NRC, RG 1.206, “Applications for Nuclear Power Plants,” Washington, DC.
6. NRC, RG 1.215, “Guidance for ITAAC Closure Under 10 CFR Part 52,” Washington, DC.
7. NRC, RG 1.28, “Quality Assurance Program Criteria (Design and Construction),” Washington, DC.
8. NRC, NUREG-0800, “Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Plants: LWR Edition,” Washington, DC.
9. NRC, COL-ISG-025, “Interim Staff Guidance on Changes during Construction under 10 CFR Part 52,” Washington, DC, July 2015. (ADAMS Accession No. ML15058A377).
10. Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), NEI 96-07, “Guideline for Implementation of Change Control Processes for New Nuclear Power Plants Licensed under 10 CFR Part 52,” Appendix C, Revision 0-Corrected, March 2014.³
11. NRC, “Acceptance for Endorsement of Nuclear Energy Institute 96-07, Appendix C, Revision 0-Corrected: Guideline for Implementation of Change Control Processes for New Nuclear Power Plants Licensed Under 10 CFR Part 52,” July 2, 2014. (ADAMS Accession No. ML14113A529)
12. Executive Order 14300, “Ordering the Reform of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,” May 23, 2025
13. NRC, “Standard Design Certification for the U.S. Advanced Boiling Water Reactor Design,” *Federal Register*, Vol. 62, No. 91, May 12, 1997, pp. 25800–25831 (62 FR 25800), Washington, DC, May 12, 1997.

² Publicly available NRC published documents are available electronically through the NRC Library on the NRC’s public website at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/> and through the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. For problems with ADAMS, contact the Public Document Room staff at 301-415-4737 or (800) 397-4209, or email pdr.resource@nrc.gov. The NRC Public Document Room (PDR), where you may also examine and order copies of publicly available documents, is open by appointment. To make an appointment to visit the PDR, please send an email to pdr.resource@nrc.gov or call 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. eastern time (ET), Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

³ Publications from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) are available at their Web site: <http://www.nei.org> or by contacting the headquarters at Nuclear Energy Institute, 1201 F St., NW, Suite 1100, Washington DC 20004-1218, Phone: 202-739-8000, Fax 202-785-4019.

14. NRC, “Changes, Tests, and Experiments,” *Federal Register*, Vol. 64, Issue No. 191, pp. 53582–53617 (64 FR 53582), Washington, DC, October 4, 1999.
15. NRC, “AP1000 Design Certification,” *Federal Register*, Vol. 71, No. 18, pp. 4464–4482 (71 FR 4464), Washington, DC, January 27, 2006.
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⁴ Copies of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) documents may be obtained through their Web site: WWW.IAEA.Org/ or by writing the International Atomic Energy Agency, P.O. Box 100 Wagramer Strasse 5, A-1400 Vienna, Austria.