

Kingdom and Australia. In this regard, the Applicants state that CSFB or a Foreign Affiliate of CSFB will be subject to the same terms and conditions set forth in PTE 99-45.

In addition, on page 46827 of the proposal, in the section captioned "Notice to Interested Persons," the Department is amending the termination date for the comment period from "30 days" from the date of publication of the proposed exemption in the **Federal Register** to "45 days" from such publication date. The revised time frame will then conform with the October 22, 2001 final date for the receipt of comments and hearing requests referenced on page 46827 in the **Dates** section of the proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Jan D. Broady of the Department at (202) 219-8881. (This is not a toll-free number.)

Signed at Washington, DC, this 11th day of September, 2001.

Ivan L. Strasfeld,

*Director of Exemption Determinations,
Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration,
U.S. Department of Labor.*

[FR Doc. 01-23156 Filed 9-14-01; 8:45 am]

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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposal Review Panel for Integrative Biology and Neuroscience; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces the following meeting:

Name: Proposal Review Panel for Integrative Biology and Neuroscience (10745).

Dates/Time: October 24-26, 2001, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Place: NSF, Room 680, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA.

Type of Meeting: Part-open.

Contact Person: Dr. Judith Plesset, Program Director, Developmental Mechanism, Division of Integrative Biology and Neuroscience, Suite 685, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230, Telephone: (703) 292-8417.

Purpose of Meeting: To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

Minutes: May be obtained from the contact person listed above.

Agenda: Open Session: October 26th, 2001; 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.—discussion on research trends, opportunities and assessment

procedures in Integrative Biology and Neuroscience with Dr. Mary Clutter, Assistant Director, Directorate for Biological Sciences.

Closed Session: October 24th, 2001, 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; October 25th, 2001, 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; October 26th, 2001, 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. To review and evaluate the Developmental Mechanisms proposals as part of the selection process for awards.

Reason For Closing: The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: September 11, 2001.

Susanne Bolton,

Committee Meeting Officer.

[FR Doc. 01-23176 Filed 9-14-01; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-400]

Carolina Power & Light Company; Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant; Exemption

1.0 Background

Carolina Power & Light Company, (CP&L, the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License No. NPF-63, which authorizes operation of the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant (HNP). The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC, the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

The facility consists of one pressurized water reactor located in Wake and Chatham Counties, North Carolina.

2.0 Request/Action

Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) § 55.59(a)(1) requires that each licensed operator successfully complete a requalification program developed by the licensee that has been approved by the Commission. This program is to be conducted for a continuous period not to exceed 24 months in duration and upon its conclusion must be promptly followed by a successive requalification program. In addition, pursuant to 10 CFR

55.59(a)(2), each licensed operator must also pass a comprehensive requalification written examination and an annual operating test.

By letter dated January 9, 2001, as supplemented on May 7, 2001, the licensee requested an exemption under 10 CFR 55.11 from the requirements of 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (a)(2). The exemption requested will extend the current HNP requalification program from December 31, 2001, to March 31, 2002. The requested exemption would constitute a one-time extension of the requalification program duration.

3.0 Discussion

Pursuant to 10 CFR 55.11, the Commission may, upon application by an interested person, or upon its own initiative, grant such exemptions from the requirements of the regulations in this part as it determines are authorized by law and will not endanger life or property and are otherwise in the public interest.

The Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 55.11, granting an exemption to the licensee from the requirements in 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (a)(2) is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property, and is in the public interest. To require the licensee's operators and staff to support the comprehensive examination and operating tests schedule during the 24-month requalification cycle could have a detrimental effect on the public interest because it would remove qualified operators from extended shutdown for refueling, steam generator replacement, and power uprate modifications, which could interfere with the current HNP schedule. Further, this one-time exemption will provide additional operator support during plant shutdown conditions, which would provide a safety enhancement during plant shutdown operations, post-modification and maintenance testing. The affected licensed operators will continue to demonstrate and possess the required levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to safely operate the plant throughout the transitional period via continuation of the current satisfactory licensed operator requalification program.

4.0 Conclusion

Accordingly, the Commission hereby grants the licensee an exemption on a one-time only basis from the requirements of 10 CFR 55.59(a)(1) and (a)(2) to allow the current HNP requalification program to be extended beyond the 24 months, but not to exceed 27 months and to expire on March 31, 2002. Upon completion of the

examinations on March 31, 2002, the follow-on cycle will end on March 31, 2004. Future requalification cycles will run from April 1 to March 31.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (66 FR 38328).

This exemption is effective upon issuance and expires on March 8, 2003.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of September 2001.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Bruce A. Boger,

Director, Division of Inspection Program Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 01-23150 Filed 9-14-01; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[50-458]

Entergy Operations, Inc.; River Bend Station; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the NRC) is considering issuance of an exemption from 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G for Facility Operating License No. NPF-47, issued to Entergy Operations, Inc. (the licensee), for operation of the River Bend Station, Unit 1 (RBS) located in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana. Therefore, as required by 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt the licensee from certain provisions of 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G. Pursuant to 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, pressure-temperature limits (P-T) are required to be established for reactor pressure vessels (RPVs) during normal operating and hydrostatic or leak rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, states, “***[t]he appropriate requirements on both the pressure-temperature limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions.” Appendix G to 10 CFR part 50 specifies that the requirements for these limits are the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (the Code), Section XI, Appendix G limits.

The proposed action would substitute ASME Code Case N-640 for specific

requirements in 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G. Code Case N-640, “Alternative Reference Fracture Toughness for Development of P-T Limit Curves Section XI, Division 1,” permits the use of an alternative reference fracture toughness (K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve instead of the K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve) for RPV materials in determining the P-T limits. Since the K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Code Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A-4200-1 provides greater allowable fracture toughness than the corresponding K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve of ASME Code Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G-2210-1, using the K_{Ic} fracture toughness, as permitted by Code Case N-640, in establishing the P-T limits would be less conservative than the methodology currently endorsed by 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G. Considering this, an exemption to apply the Code Case would be required by 10 CFR 50.60. Accordingly, the licensee requested an exemption from the requirements in 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G.

Use of the K_{Ic} curve in determining the lower bound fracture toughness in the development of P-T operating limits is more technically correct than the K_{Ia} curve, since the rate of loading during a heatup or cooldown is slow and is more representative of a static condition than a dynamic condition. The K_{Ic} curve appropriately implements the use of static initiation fracture toughness behavior to evaluate the controlled heatup and cooldown process relative to an RPV. The ASME Code Section XI, Appendix G, procedure was conservatively developed based on the level of knowledge existing in 1974 concerning RPV materials and the estimated effects of operation. Since 1974, the level of knowledge about these topics has been greatly expanded. The NRC staff concludes that this increased knowledge permits relaxation of the ASME Code Section XI, Appendix G requirements by applying K_{Ic} fracture toughness, as permitted by Code Case N-640, while maintaining, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), the underlying purpose of the ASME Code and the NRC regulations to ensure an acceptable margin of safety.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment and exemption dated January 24, 2001, as supplemented by letters dated July 2, and August 6 and 20, 2001, and is needed to support the technical specification (TS) amendment that is contained in the same submittal and is being processed separately. The proposed TS amendment will revise the P-T limits of TS 3.4.11, RCS [Reactor

Coolant System] Pressure and Temperature Limits,” related to the heatup, cooldown, and inservice test limitations for the RCS to a maximum of 16 Effective Full Power Years (EFPY). The proposed action replaces TS Figure 3.4-11, “Minimum Temperature Required Vs. RCS Pressure,” with recalculated RCS P-T limits based, in part, on the alternative methodology in Code Case N-640.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The revised P-T limits are needed to allow required reactor vessel hydrostatic and leak tests to be performed at a significantly lower temperature. These tests are to be performed during the upcoming refueling outage scheduled to commence in September 2001. The lower temperature for the tests can reduce refueling outage critical path time by reducing or eliminating the heatup time to achieve required test conditions.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the exemption and associated license amendment described above would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle failure of the RBS reactor vessel. The lower temperature, is also safer for test inspectors due to lower ambient drywell temperatures and could result in lower radiological dose due to increased inspection effectiveness at the lower temperature.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect any historic sites. It does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the