

under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: May 1, 2001.

Susanne Bolton,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 01-11292 Filed 5-3-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposal Review; Notice of Meetings

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces its intent to hold proposal review meetings throughout the year. The purpose of these meetings is to provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to the NSF for financial support. The agenda for each of these meetings is to review and evaluate proposals as part of the selection process for awards. The majority of these meetings will take place at NSF, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22230.

All of these meetings will be closed to the public. 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. NSF will continue to review the agenda and merits of each meeting for overall compliance of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

These closed proposal review meetings will no longer be announced on an individual basis in the **Federal Register**. NSF intends to publish a notice similar to this on a quarterly basis. For an advance listing of the closed proposal review meetings that include the names of the proposal review panel and the time, date, place, and any information on changes, corrections, or cancellations, please visit the NSF web-site: www.nsf.gov/home/pubinfo/advisory.htm. This information may also be requested by telephoning 703/292-8182.

Dated: May 1, 2001.

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[FR Doc. 01-11287 Filed 5-3-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[50-301]

Nuclear Management Company, LLC Duane Arnold Energy Center; Exemption

1.0 Background

Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC, the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR-49 which authorizes operation of the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC). The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

The facility consists of a boiling water reactor located on NMC's DAEC site, which is located in Linn County, Iowa.

2.0 Purpose

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) part 50, Appendix G requires that pressure-temperature (P-T) limits 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 that, "The appropriate requirements on both the pressure-temperature limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions." Appendix G of 10 CFR part 50 specifies that the P-T limits must meet the safety margin requirements specified in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (Code), Section XI, Appendix G.

To address provisions of the proposed amendments to the technical specification (TS) P-T limits, the licensee requested in its submittal dated October 16, 2000, that the staff exempt DAEC from application of specific requirements of 10 CFR part 50, § 50.60(a) and 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, and substitute use of ASME Code Case N-640. Code Case N-640 permits the use of an alternate reference fracture toughness (K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve instead of K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve) for reactor vessel materials in determining the P-T limits. The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption contained in the October 16, 2000, submittal, and is needed to support the TS amendment request that is contained in the same submittal. The proposed amendment will revise the P-T limits for heatup, cooldown, and inservice test limitations for the reactor coolant system (RCS) to 25 and 32 effective full power years (EFPYs).

Code Case N-640

The licensee has proposed an exemption to allow use of ASME Code Case N-640 in conjunction with ASME Section XI, 10 CFR 50.60(a) and 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, to determine that the P-T limits meet the underlying intent of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulations.

The proposed amendment to revise the P-T limits for DAEC relies in part on the requested exemption. These revised P-T limits have been developed using the K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A-2200-1, in lieu of the K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve of ASME Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G-2210-1, as the lower bound for fracture toughness. The other margins involved with the ASME Section XI, Appendix G process of determining P-T limit curves remain unchanged.

Use of the K_{Ic} curve in determining the lower bound fracture toughness in the development of P-T operating limits curve is more technically correct than the K_{Ia} curve. The K_{Ic} curve appropriately implements the use of static initiation fracture toughness behavior to evaluate the controlled heatup and cooldown process of a reactor vessel. The licensee has determined that the use of the initial conservatism of the K_{Ia} curve when the curve was codified in 1974 was justified. This initial conservatism was necessary due to the limited knowledge of RPV materials. Since 1974, additional knowledge has been gained about RPV materials, which demonstrates that the lower bound on fracture toughness provided by the K_{Ia} curve is well beyond the margin of safety required to protect the public health and safety from potential RPV failure. In addition, P-T curves based on the K_{Ic} curve will enhance overall plant safety by opening the P-T operating window with the greatest safety benefit in the region of low temperature operations. The operating window through which the operator heats up and cools down the RCS is determined by the difference between the maximum allowable pressure determined by Appendix G of ASME Section XI, and the minimum required pressure for the reactor coolant pump seals adjusted for instrument uncertainties.

Since the RCS P-T operating window is defined by the P-T operating and test limit curves developed in accordance with the ASME Section XI, Appendix G procedure, continued operation of DAEC with these P-T curves without the relief provided by ASME Code Case N-640 may unnecessarily restrict the P-