

2.700, 2.702, 2.714, 2.714a, 2.717, and 2.772(j) of the Commission's Regulations, all as amended, an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board is being established to preside over the following proceeding.

Power Inspection, Inc.

Order Imposing Civil Monetary Penalty

This Board is being established pursuant to the request of Power Inspection, Inc. for an enforcement hearing. The hearing request was made in response to an Order issued by the Director, Office of Enforcement, dated February 3, 1998, entitled "Order Imposing Civil Monetary Penalty" (63 FR 6967, February 11, 1998).

The Board is comprised of the following administrative judges:

Peter B. Bloch, Chairman, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555

Dr. Richard F. Cole, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555

Frederick J. Shon, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555

All correspondence, documents and other materials shall be filed with the Judges in accordance with 10 CFR 2.701.

Issued at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of March 1998.

B. Paul Cotter, Jr.,

Chief Administrative Judge, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel.

[FR Doc. 98-7418 Filed 3-20-98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-317 and 50-318]

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company; Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-53 and DPR-69, issued to Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE or the licensee), for operation of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2 located in Calvert County, Maryland.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to the licensee's application dated December 4, 1996, as supplemented by letters dated March 27, June 9, June 18, July 21, August 14, August 19, September 10, October 6, October 20, October 23, November 5, 1997, and January 12 and January 28, 1998. The proposed amendment will replace the Current Technical Specifications (CTS) in their entirety with Improved Technical Specifications (ITS) based on Revision 1 to NUREG-1432, "Standard Technical Specifications for Combustion Engineering Plants" dated October 9, 1996, and the CTS for Calvert Cliffs.

The Need for the Proposed Action

It has been recognized that nuclear safety in all plants would benefit from improvement and standardization of technical specifications (TSs). The Commission's "NRC Interim Policy Statement on Technical Specification Improvements for Nuclear Power Reactors," 52 FR 3788 (February 6, 1987), and later the Commission's "Final Policy Statement on Technical Specification Improvements for Nuclear Power Reactors," 58 FR 39132 (July 22, 1993), recognized this benefit. This formed the basis for a recent revision to 10 CFR 50.36 (60 FR 36953), which codified the criteria for determining the content of TSs. To facilitate the development of individual improved TS, each reactor vendor owners group (OG) and the NRC staff developed standard TS (STS). The NRC Committee to Review Generic Requirements (CRGR) reviewed the STS and made note of the safety merits of the STS and indicated its support of conversion to the STS by operating plants. For plants designed by Combustion Engineering, Inc., the STS are published as NUREG-1432, and this document was the basis for the new Calvert Cliffs ITS.

Description of the Proposed Change

The proposed revision to the TS is based on NUREG-1432 and on guidance provided in the Final Policy Statement. Its objective is to completely rewrite, reformat, and streamline the existing TS. Emphasis is placed on human factors principles to improve clarity and understanding. The Bases section has been significantly expanded to clarify and better explain the purpose and foundation of each specification. In addition to NUREG-1432, portions of the existing TS were also used as the basis for the ITS. Plant-specific issues

(unique design features, requirements, and operating practices) were discussed at length with the licensee, and generic matters were discussed with the OG.

The proposed changes from the existing TS can be grouped into four general categories, as follows:

1. Non-technical (administrative) changes, which were intended to make the ITS easier to use for plant operations personnel. They are purely editorial in nature or involve the movement or reformatting of requirements without affecting technical content. Every section of the Calvert Cliffs TS has undergone these types of changes. In order to ensure consistency, the NRC staff and the licensee have used NUREG-1432 as guidance to reformat and make other administrative changes.
2. Relocation of requirements, which includes items that were in the existing Calvert Cliffs TS. The TS that are being relocated to licensee-controlled documents are not required to be in the TS under 10 CFR 50.36 and do not meet any of the four criteria in the Commission's Final Policy Statement for inclusion in the TS. They are not needed to obviate the possibility that an abnormal situation or event will give rise to an immediate threat to the public health and safety. The NRC staff has concluded that appropriate controls have been established for all of the current specifications, information, and requirements that are being moved to licensee-controlled documents. In general, the proposed relocation of items in the current Calvert Cliffs TS to the Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR), appropriate plant-specific programs, procedures and ITS Bases follows the guidance of the Combustion STS (NUREG-1432). Once the items have been relocated by removing them from the CTS to licensee-controlled documents, the licensee may revise them under the provisions of 10 CFR 50.59 or other NRC staff-approved control mechanisms, which provide appropriate procedural means to control changes.
3. More restrictive requirements, which consist of proposed Calvert Cliffs ITS items that are either more conservative than corresponding requirements in the existing Calvert Cliffs TS, or are additional restrictions that are not in the existing Calvert Cliffs TS but are contained in NUREG-1432. Examples of more restrictive requirements include: placing a Limiting Condition for Operation (LCO) on plant equipment that is not required by the present TS to be operable; more restrictive requirements to restore inoperable equipment; and more restrictive surveillance requirements.

4. Less restrictive requirements, which are relaxations of corresponding requirements in the existing Calvert Cliffs TS that provide little or no safety benefit and place unnecessary burdens on the licensee. These relaxations were the result of generic NRC actions or other analyses. They have been justified on a case-by-case basis for Calvert Cliffs as will be described in the staff's Safety Evaluation to be issued with the license amendment which will be noticed in the **Federal Register**.

In addition to the changes described above, the licensee proposed certain changes to the existing TS that deviated from the STS in NUREG-1432. These additional proposed changes are described in the licensee's application and in the staff's Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License and Opportunity for a Hearing (62 FR 4816). Where these changes represent a change to the current licensing basis for Calvert Cliffs, they have been justified on a case-by-case basis and will be described in the staff's Safety Evaluation to be issued with the license amendment.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed TS conversion would not increase the probability or consequences of accidents previously analyzed and would not affect facility radiation levels or facility radiological effluents.

Changes that are administrative in nature have been found to have no effect on the technical content of the TS, and are acceptable. The increased clarity and understanding these changes bring to the TS are expected to improve the operator's control of the plant in normal and accident conditions.

Relocation of requirements to licensee-controlled documents does not change the requirements themselves. Future changes to these requirements may be made by the licensee under 10 CFR 50.59 or other NRC-approved control mechanisms, which ensures continued maintenance of adequate requirements. All such relocations have been found to be in conformance with the guidelines of NUREG-1432 and the Final Policy Statement, and, therefore, are acceptable.

Changes involving more restrictive requirements have been found to be acceptable and are likely to enhance the safety of plant operations.

Changes involving less restrictive requirements have been reviewed individually. When requirements have

been shown to provide little or no safety benefit or place unnecessary burdens on the licensee, their removal from the TS was justified. In most cases, relaxations previously granted to individual plants on a plant-specific basis were the result of a generic NRC action, or of agreements reached during discussions with the OG and found to be acceptable for Calvert Cliffs. Generic relaxations contained in NUREG-1432 as well as proposed deviations from NUREG-1432 have also been reviewed by the NRC staff and have been found to be acceptable.

In summary, the proposed revision to the TS was found to provide control of plant operations such that reasonable assurance will be provided so that the health and safety of the public will be adequately protected.

These TS changes will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluent that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed amendments, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the proposed action would be to deny the request for the amendment. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement dated April 1973, for the

Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 16, 1998, the staff consulted with the Maryland State official, Richard J. McLean, of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letters dated December 4, 1996, as supplemented by letters dated March 27, June 9, June 18, July 21, August 14, August 19, September 10, October 6, October 20, October 23, November 5, 1997, and January 12 and 28, 1998, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Calvert County Library, Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of March 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

S. Singh Bajwa,

Director, Project Directorate I-1, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98-7425 Filed 3-20-98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-443]

North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation Seabrook Station, Unit No. 1; Issuance of Director's Decision Under 10 CFR 2.206

Notice is hereby given that the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), has taken action with regard to a Petition dated December 18, 1997, submitted by Ms. Jane Doughty on behalf of The Seacoast Anti-Pollution League. The Petition requests that the operating license for Seabrook Station be suspended until such time as a thorough root cause analysis of the reasons underlying the development of leaks in piping of the "B" train of the