

test pressure of 20.2 psig applied between the inboard and outboard MSIVs) is an acceptable method for testing MSIV leakage; (2) the proposed MSIV leakage ALT pathway will withstand the seismic loads from an SSE and remain functional; and (3) the calculated radiation doses assuming an MSIV leakage rate limit of 100 scfh per main steamline, not to exceed 400 scfh for all four main steamlines, are within the radiation exposure guidelines in 10 CFR Part 100, meet the requirements of GDC-19 of Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 50 and are consistent with SRP Section 6.4. On this basis, the staff finds it acceptable to continue to exempt LaSalle, Units 1 and 2, from the 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Option B, requirements to include the measured MSIV leakage rate from the combined local rate tests since the radiological consequences of the MSIV leakage are acceptable and continue to meet the underlying intent of the rule. Therefore, the staff finds that the requested modification to the existing exemption in the licensee's submittal dated August 28, 1995, as supplemented on March 4, 1996, may be granted.

III

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, the Commission may, upon application by any interested person or upon its own initiative, grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50 when: (1) the exemptions are authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security; and (2) when special circumstances are present. Special circumstances are present whenever, according to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), "Application of the regulation in the particular circumstances would not serve the underlying purpose of the rule or is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule * * *."

The underlying purpose of the rule is to assure leakage through the primary reactor containment, and systems and components penetrating primary containment do not exceed allowable leakage rate values and that periodic surveillance is performed so that proper maintenance and repair are made. The staff analysis has demonstrated that an adequate margin can be maintained even if leakage past the MSIVs through the ALT pathway occurs at the TS allowable MSIV leakage rates of 100 scfh for each main steamline, not to exceed a total of 400 scfh for all four main steamlines.

IV

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to Section 50.12 of 10 CFR Part 50, an exemption is authorized by law and will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and that there are special circumstances present, as specified in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2). An exemption is hereby granted from the requirements of Sections III.B, of Appendix J, Option B, to 10 CFR Part 50 regarding testing the MSIVs at accident pressure and including MSIV leakage rates in the sum of the Type B and C leakage rates. The exemption allows: (1) leakage testing of the MSIVs using a minimum test pressure of 20.2 psig applied between MSIVs and a TS leakage rate limit of 100 scfh per main steamline past the MSIVs, not to exceed 400 scfh for all four main steamlines; and (2) exclusion of the measured MSIV leakage rate from the evaluation of the combined local leak rate tests.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (61 FR 14837).

This exemption is effective upon issuance and will be implemented prior to startup of LaSalle, Unit 1, from its present refueling outage and implemented for LaSalle, Unit 2, prior to startup from its refueling outage scheduled to start in September 1996.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 5th day of April 1996.

Jack W. Roe,

*Director, Division of Reactor Projects—III/IV,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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[Docket No. 50-395]

South Carolina Electric & Gas Company and South Carolina Public Service Authority; Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1; 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 No. NPF-12, issued to South Carolina Electric & Gas Company and South Carolina Public Service Authority, (the licensee), for operation of the Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1 (VCSNS), located in Fairfield County, South Carolina.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would allow the licensee to increase allowed core power level from 2775 Megawatts thermal (MWt) to 2900 MWt which is a 4.5% increase in rated core power.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated August 18, 1995, as supplemented on November 1, 1995, February 14, March 14 (there are two supplemental letters dated March 14), and March 25, 1996.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action is needed to allow the licensee to increase the electrical output of VCSNS by approximately 64 MW and thus provide additional electrical power to the grid which serves commercial and domestic areas in the State of South Carolina.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that a slight change in the environmental impact can be expected for the proposed increase in power. The proposed core uprate is projected to increase the heat rejected to the environment by approximately 3 percent to a maximum of 6.4 (10⁹) British thermal units per hour (Btu/hr).

In the Final Environmental Statement (FES) related to the operation of Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1 (NUREG-0719), the staff evaluated a heat rejection rate of 6.7 (10⁹) Btu/hr. Thus, the additional thermal rejection resulting from the power uprate is bounded by the heat rejection rate evaluated and found acceptable in the FES.

Additionally, the licensee stated they will not exceed the 113°F maximum circulating water discharge temperature as specified in their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The licensee has administrative procedures in place to reduce power as necessary to ensure the temperature limit is not exceeded. Also, to limit the heat load rejected to the Monticello Reservoir, the licensee will be installing a closed cycle cooling water system that will reject heat to the atmosphere via a mechanical draft cooling tower. The total circulating water system flow rate is predicted to decrease slightly (from approximately 538,000 gallons per minute (gpm) to approximately 530,000 gpm) due to the addition of the cooling tower. Therefore, water velocity at the intake structure will continue to remain below the velocity of 0.5 feet per second

that was assumed in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Section 316(b), entrainment and impingement study performed by the licensee for initial plant licensing.

The licensee also concluded that the increased heat load rejected to the Monticello Reservoir will not cause the thermal component of the effluent to exceed the NPDES condition for maximum surface temperature or maximum plume temperature rise.

The heatload rejected by the cooling tower was calculated by the licensee to be 60.66 MBtu/hr at 100% capacity. The cooling tower effluents, including salt drift and chemical discharges, have been determined by the licensee to have a negligible effect on all VCSNS structures and systems. The dispersant and anti-fouling chemicals added to the cooling tower raw water will be sufficiently diluted to preclude any significant environmental impact. Limits on the release of these chemicals will be determined by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and will be included in the licensee's NPDES permit. Since circulating water flow is critical for adequate dilution, the licensee will establish procedures to control the release of these chemicals. The required controls are listed in the licensee's March 25, 1996 letter. The cooling tower will be constructed outside the protected area fence in an empty field at the northwest corner of the site. Any environmental effects of the cooling tower construction will be confined to onsite areas previously disturbed during initial plant construction.

The staff previously evaluated the radiological impact of operating at 2900 MWt in a November 18, 1994 safety evaluation (SE) supporting issuance of License Amendment No. 119. This amendment was requested to support the licensee's steam generator (SG) replacement project. The majority of the licensee's SG replacement analyses were written for the planned uprate power of 2900 MWt. The staff discussed the radiological considerations of operation at the uprated power in Section 2.5 of the SE. The staff concluded that " * * * the doses would not exceed the dose guidelines presently contained in the Standard Review Plans, 10 CFR Part 100 or GDC 19 of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix A for either offsite locations or control room operators." Therefore, the radiological consequences of the proposed uprate have been previously evaluated by the staff.

The uprate conditions will also result in storage of spent fuel with a higher irradiation. By letter dated, December

13, 1993, as supplemented February 2, and March 11, 1994, the licensee requested a license amendment to allow the use and subsequent storage of fuel with an initial enrichment to 5.0 weight percent Uranium-235. This request was made, in part, to support the core power uprate to 2900 MWt. On August 15, 1994, (59 FR 41799) the staff published its "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact," which concluded the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the environmental impacts of this aspect of the licensee's power uprate proposal has been previously evaluated by the Commission.

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

Except for heat load, which is bounded by previous analysis as discussed above, the amendment does not significantly 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 significant environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. 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 for the Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit 1.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on February 26, 1996, the staff consulted with the South Carolina State official, Mr. Virgil Autry of the Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste

Management, Department of Health and Environmental Control, 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 August 18, 1995, as supplemented on November 1, 1995 February 14, March 14 (the licensee submitted two supplemental letters dated March 14, 1996) and March 25, 1996, 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 Fairfield County Library, 300 Washington Street, Winnsboro, SC.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 8th day of April, 1996.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Frederick J. Hebdon,
Director, Project Directorate II-3, Division of Reactor Projects - I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

SUMMARY: In accordance with the requirement of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 which provides opportunity for public comment on new or revised data collections, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will publish periodic summaries of proposed data collections.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RRB's estimate of the burden of the collection of the information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden related to the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.