

*Date and Time:* March 26–27, 1997; 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

*Place:* National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 1175, Arlington, VA 22230.

*Type of Meeting:* Closed.

*Contact Person(s):* Mark Luker, Program Director, CISE/NCRI, Room 1175, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230, (703) 306–1950.

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

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate proposals submitted for the Connections to the Internet Program.

*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: March 7, 1997.

Linda Allen-Benton,

*Deputy Director, Division of Human Resource Management, Acting Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 97–6225 Filed 3–11–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555–01–M

## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

### Public Hearing in Atlanta, Georgia: Aviation Accident

In connection with its investigation of the accident involving Delta Air Lines, Inc. Flight 1288, MD–88, N927DA, Pensacola Regional Airport, Pensacola, Florida, July 6, 1996, the National Transportation Safety Board will convene a public hearing at 9:00 a.m., (est.) on March 26, 1997, in Ballroom A, at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers Hotel, located at 255 Courtland Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. For more information, contact Shelly Hazle, Office of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20594, telephone (202) 314–6100.

Dated: March 7, 1997.

Bea Hardesty,

*Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 97–6192 Filed 3–11–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7533–01–P

## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–293]

### Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station; Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR–35 issued to Boston Edison Company (BECO, the licensee) for operation of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station located in Plymouth County, Massachusetts.

The proposed amendment would review and approve the engineering analysis used to evaluate the effects of damping values in the seismic analysis of various Pilgrim Station piping systems. Following NRC approval, BECO would revise the Pilgrim Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) to make the above engineering analysis the design basis of record for the affected piping systems provided in the licensee's January 24, 1997, letter, as supplemented on February 13 and 27, 1997.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendment, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

(1) Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The engineering evaluation referenced above compared newly generated in-structure response spectra for the reactor building using an enhanced reactor building model and included the effects of soil/structure interaction. The results show the new spectra are enveloped by a comparable UFSAR design basis spectra and that piping stresses

are less than design basis allowables. The new spectra differ from the current UFSAR response spectra in that the generic Regulatory Guide 1.60 spectral shape is used to characterize the 0.15g Safe Shutdown Earthquake control motion using a soil/structure interaction analysis with an upgraded structural model to evaluate building response and ASME Code Case N411 damping values for piping analyses.

The new piping stresses computed, as described above, result in less than design basis allowables. Since the stresses are acceptable and the methods to compute them used applicable Standard Review Plan (SRP) guidance, the proposed UFSAR revision does not significantly increase the probability of loss-of-coolant accidents (i.e., piping failures) nor significantly reduce the reliability of piping needed to mitigate the consequences of accidents. Therefore, the proposed revision does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

(2) Create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

The revision relates to the method used to compute the response of structures and piping to seismic excitation and does not introduce a new type of failure mode. Since no new accident initiators are created, no new types of accidents can occur. Therefore, the proposed revision does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

(3) Involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The margin of safety for affected piping systems is reduced because the new response spectra results in a reduction of the computed seismic stresses compared to those computed using current UFSAR response spectra. However, this reduction in margin is not significant because the resulting piping stresses are less than design basis allowable values, and the methods used to compute response spectra associated with the 0.15 g Safe Shutdown Earthquake were determined using applicable NRC SRP guidance. Thus, although margin of safety for the affected piping is reduced, it is not a significant reduction in the margin of safety.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 30 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 30-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period such that

failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 30-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish in the Federal Register a notice of issuance and provide for opportunity for a hearing after issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and should cite the publication date and page number of this Federal Register notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D22, Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC.

The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By April 11, 1997, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714 which is available 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 Plymouth Public Library, 132 South Street, Plymouth, Massachusetts. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or

petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If a hearing is requested, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it immediately effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Docketing and Services Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last 10 days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1-(800) 248-5100 (in Missouri 1-(800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number N1023 and the following message addressed to Patrick D. Milano: petitioner's name and telephone number, date petition was mailed, plant name, and publication date and page number of this Federal Register notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to W.S. Stowe, Esquire, Boston Edison Company, 800 Boylston Street, 36th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts, 02199, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a

balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1) (i)–(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated January 24, 1997, as supplemented February 13 and 27, 1997, 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 Plymouth Public Library, 132 South Street, Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 6th day of March 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
Alan B. Wang,

*Project Manager, Project Directorate I-3,  
Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of  
Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 97-6176 Filed 3-11-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

#### [Docket No. 50-313]

#### **Entergy Operations, Inc.; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1 Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Facility Operating License No. DPR-51, issued to Entergy Operations, Inc. (the licensee), for operation of Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1 (ANO-1), located in Pope County, Arkansas.

#### **Environmental Assessment**

##### *Identification of the Proposed Action*

The proposed action would allow the licensee to utilize American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (Code) Case N-514, "Low Temperature Overpressure Protection" to determine its low temperature overpressure protection (LTOP) setpoints. By application dated November 26, 1996, the licensee requested an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 50.60, "Acceptance Criteria for Fracture Prevention Measures for Lightwater Nuclear Power Reactors for Normal Operation." The exemption would allow application of an alternate methodology to determine the LTOP setpoints for ANO-1. The proposed alternate methodology is consistent with guidelines developed by the ASME Working Group on Operating Plant Criteria (WGOPC) to define pressure limits during LTOP events that avoid certain unnecessary operational

restrictions, provide adequate margins against failure of the reactor pressure vessel, and reduce the potential for unnecessary activation of pressure relieving devices used for LTOP. These guidelines have been incorporated into Code Case N-514, "Low Temperature Overpressure Protection." Code Case N-514 has been approved by the ASME Code Committee and incorporated into Appendix G of Section XI of the ASME Code and published in the 1993 Addenda to Section XI. However, 10 CFR 50.55a, "Codes and Standards," and Regulatory Guide 1.147, "Inservice Inspection Code Case Acceptability," have not been updated to reflect the acceptability of Code Case N-514.

##### *The Need for the Proposed Action*

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.60, all lightwater nuclear power reactors must meet the fracture toughness requirements for the reactor coolant pressure boundary as set forth in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G. 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, defines pressure/temperature (P/T) limits during any condition of normal operation including anticipated operational occurrences and system hydrostatic tests, to which the pressure boundary may be subjected over its service lifetime. It is specified in 10 CFR 50.60(b) that alternatives to the described requirements in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, may be used when an exemption is granted by the Commission under 10 CFR 50.12.

To prevent transients that would produce excursions exceeding the 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, P/T limits while the reactor is operating at low temperatures, the licensee installed the LTOP system. The LTOP system includes the electromechanical relief valve (ERV) that is set to the LTOP mode when reactor pressure and temperature are reduced. The ERV prevents the pressure in the reactor vessel from exceeding the P/T limits of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G. However, to prevent ERV from lifting as a result of normal operating pressure surges, some margin is needed between the normal operating pressure and the ERV setpoint.

To meet the 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G P/T limits, the ERV would be set to open at a pressure very close to the normal pressure inside the reactor. With the ERV setpoint close to the normal operating pressure, minor pressure perturbations that typically occur in the reactor could cause the ERV to open periodically. This is undesirable from the safety perspective because after every ERV opening there is some concern that the ERV may not reclose. A stuck open ERV would continue to discharge primary coolant and reduce

reactor pressure until the discharge pathway was closed by operator action.

Code Case N-514 would permit a slightly higher pressure inside the reactor during shutdown conditions. The ability to maintain a higher pressure in the reactor would allow a higher ERV setpoint and the likelihood for inadvertent opening of the ERV would be reduced.

##### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

Appendix G of the ASME Code requires that the P/T limits be calculated: (a) using a safety factor of two on the principal membrane (pressure) stresses, (b) assuming a flaw at the surface with a depth of one quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of the vessel wall thickness and a length of six (6) times its depth, and (c) using a conservative fracture toughness curve that is based on the lower bound of static, dynamic, and crack arrest fracture toughness tests on material similar to the ANO-1 reactor vessel material.

Code Case N-514 guidelines are intended to ensure that the LTOP limits are still below the pressure/temperature (P/T) limits for normal operation, but to allow the pressure that may occur with activation of pressure relieving devices to exceed the P/T limits, provided acceptable margins are maintained during these events. This approach protects the pressure vessel from LTOP events, and maintains the Technical Specifications P/T limits applicable for normal heatup and cooldown in accordance with 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G and Sections III and XI of the ASME Code.

In determining the ERV setpoint for LTOP events, the licensee proposed the use of safety margins based on an alternate methodology consistent with the proposed ASME Code Case N-514 guidelines. ASME Code Case N-514 allows determination of the setpoint for LTOP events such that the maximum pressure in the vessel will not exceed 110% of the P/T limits of the existing ASME Appendix G. This results in a safety factor of 1.8 on the principal membrane stresses. All other factors, including assumed flaw size and fracture toughness, remain the same. Although this methodology would reduce the safety factor on the principal membrane stresses, use of the proposed criteria will provide adequate margins of safety to the reactor vessel during LTOP transients.

Use of Code Case N-514 safety margins will reduce operational challenges during low-pressure, low-temperature operations. In terms of overall safety, the safety benefits desired