

and selection procedures for future projects in this area. NSF also will use the results to satisfy requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).

**Confidentiality:** No sensitive information is being requested in the collection.

**Estimate of Burden:** The Foundation estimates that, on average, two hours will be required to prepare the narratives, or a total of 500 hours for all 250 PIs and co-PIs. In addition, it anticipates 4 hours of interviews of an average of four people for each of 30 case studies, or 120 hours. Thus, total burden is estimated at 620 hours.

**Respondents:** Individuals.

**Estimated Number of Responses:** 370.

**Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:** 620 hours.

**Frequency of Responses:** Once.

### Comments

Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Dated: September 20, 1999.

**Suzanne H. Plimpton,**

*Reports Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-24892 Filed 9-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-M

### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

#### Special Emphasis Panel in Design, Manufacturing, and Industrial Innovation, Notice of Meeting

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

**Name:** Special Emphasis Panel in Design, Manufacture and Industrial Innovation (1194).

**Date & Time:** October 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 18, 19, and 22, 1999. 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Place:** Rooms 340, 360, 375 and 390, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230.

**Type of Meeting:** Closed.

**Contact Person:** Joseph Hennessey, Program Manager, Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs, Room 590, Division of Design, Manufacture and Industrial Innovation, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, VA 22230, Telephone (703) 306-1395, x 5283.

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

**Agenda:** To review and evaluate proposals submitted to the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs 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 21, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-25005 Filed 9-23-99; 8:45 am]

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### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

#### Duke Energy Corporation; (McGuire Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2); Exemption

[Docket Nos. 50-369 and 50-370]

#### I

Duke Energy Corporation et al. (the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-9 and NPF-17, for the McGuire Nuclear Station (MNS), Units 1 and 2. The licenses provide, among other things, that the licensee is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the Commission now or hereafter in effect.

These facilities consist of two pressurized water reactors located at the licensee's site in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

#### II

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) part 50, appendix A, specifies general design criteria for nuclear power plants. General Design Criterion (GDC) 57, regarding closed system isolation valves, states:

Each line that penetrates primary reactor containment and is neither part of the reactor coolant pressure boundary nor connected directly to the containment atmosphere shall have at least one containment isolation valve which shall be either automatic, or locked closed, or capable of remote manual operation. This valve shall be outside

containment and located as close to the containment as practical. A simple check valve may not be used as the automatic isolation valve.

The Commission may grant an exemption from the requirements of the regulations pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12 if the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security. The Commission will not consider granting an exemption unless special circumstances are present. Special circumstances are considered to be present under 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2) where application of the regulation in the particular circumstances conflicts with other rules or requirements of the Commission or where application of the regulation would not serve the underlying purpose of the rule or is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule.

### III

By letter dated April 20, 1999, the licensee requested an exemption from GDC-57 for Containment Penetrations M261 and M393, which are main steam penetrations. These lines penetrate the containment and are not part of the reactor coolant pressure boundary, nor are they connected directly to the containment atmosphere. Outside of the containment, these lines branch into various separate, individual lines before reaching the respective main steam isolation valves. From each of these main steam lines, one branch supplies main steam to the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater (TDCA, using the licensee's abbreviation) pump.

Valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 are manual gate valves located in the Interior Doghouse immediately downstream of the respective main steam piping, in the branch lines that supply main steam to the TDCA. These valves are locked open and can only be operated by local manual operation. These valves are required to be open by the Technical Specifications (TS) in order to supply steam to the TDCA, which is part of the engineered safety features. From a probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) perspective, the TDCA is one of the most risk-significant safety system components. Adding motor operators to valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78, so that they become automatic or capable of remote operation (i.e., meeting GDC-57) would degrade the reliability of the TDCA to mitigate an accident because the motor operators would introduce a new failure mode. Keeping SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 closed (i.e., meeting GDC-57)

during plant operation would violate a TS requirement.

Valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 can be manually closed, as needed during certain accidents, to isolate the steam lines they serve. If SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 are inaccessible due to post-accident environmental conditions, the associated stop check valves can be used to isolate these steam lines. The licensee stated that the amount of time needed by operators to isolate steam using SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78, or their associated stop check valves SA-5 and SA-6, has been factored into the accident analyses and resultant dose calculations in the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report.

Thus, as stated in the staff's safety evaluation, modifying valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 so that they can meet the operational requirement specified by GDC-57 would reduce the reliability of the TDCA and violate an existing TS. The time needed by operators to manually close SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 or their associated stop check valves SA-5 and SA-6, during an accident, has been factored into accident analyses. The applicable design-basis accident scenarios and consequences continue to be bounding. On such bases, the staff concludes that literal compliance with the operational aspect of GDC-57 is not desirable and the proposed exemption is acceptable.

#### IV

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that special circumstances are present as defined in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii). Specifically, the Commission finds that application of GDC-57 with respect to valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 conflicts with existing TS and is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The underlying purpose of GDC-57 is to ensure that reliable means exist to isolate this type of line when isolation is needed. As discussed above, valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78, or SA-5 and SA-6, can be manually closed to isolate their respective steam lines. Thus, the design of these valves and the existence of appropriate procedures for manually closing these valves provide a reliable method of isolating the steam lines when needed. The Commission hereby grants the licensee an exemption from the requirement of 10 CFR part 50, appendix A, GDC-57. Specifically, this exempts the licensee from having to lock close valves SA-1, SA-2, SA-77, and SA-78 against TS requirements, or having to so modify them that they become automatic, or are capable of remote manual operation.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that granting of this exemption will have no significant effect on the quality of the human environment (64 FR 50839).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 20th day of September 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**John A. Zwolinski,**

*Director, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 99-24900 Filed 9-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

#### OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

##### **Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Review of a Revised Information Collection: SF 3104 and SF 3104B**

**AGENCY:** Office of Personnel Management.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) intends to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a request for review of a revised information collection. SF 3104, Application for Death Benefits/Federal Employees Retirement, is used by persons applying for benefits which may be payable under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) because of the death of an employee, former employee, or retiree who was covered by FERS at the time of his/her death or separation from Federal Service. SF 3104B, Documentation and Elections in Support of Application for Death Benefits when Deceased was an Employee at the Time of Death, is used by applicants for death benefits under FERS if the deceased was a Federal employee at the time of death.

Comments are particularly invited on: whether this information is necessary for the proper performance of functions of the Office of Personnel Management, and whether it will have practical utility; whether our estimate of the public burden of this collection of information is accurate, and based on valid assumptions and methodology; and ways in which we can minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

It is estimated that approximately 4,873 SF 3104s will be processed annually. This form requires approximately 60 minutes to complete. An annual burden of 4,873 hours is estimated. Approximately 3,188 SF 3104Bs are expected to be processed annually. It is estimated that the form requires approximately 60 minutes to complete. An annual burden of 3,188 hours is estimated. The total annual burden is 8,061.

For copies of this proposal, contact Mary Beth Smith-Toomey on (202) 606-8358, or E-mail to mbtoomey@opm.gov

**DATES:** Comments on this proposal should be received on or before November 23, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Send or deliver comments to—John C. Crawford, Chief, FERS Division, Retirement and Insurance Service, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3313, Washington, DC 20415.

#### **FOR INFORMATION REGARDING**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION—CONTACT:** Phyllis R. Pinkney, Management Analyst, Budget & Administrative Services Division, (202) 606-0623.

Office of Personnel Management.

**Janice R. Lachance,**

*Director.*

[FR Doc. 99-24859 Filed 9-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-01-P

#### OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

[RI 92-19]

##### **Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Review of a Revised Information Collection**

**AGENCY:** Office of Personnel Management.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) intends to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a request for review of a revised information collection. RI 92-19, Application for Deferred or Postponed Retirement: Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), is used by separated employees to apply for either a deferred or a postponed FERS annuity benefit.

Comments are particularly invited on: whether this information is necessary for the proper performance of functions of the Office of Personnel Management, and whether it will have practical utility; whether our estimate of the