

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Changes to Requirements for Environmental Review for Renewal of Nuclear

Power Plant Operating Licenses, Availability of Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is announcing the completion and availability of NUREG-1437, Vol. 1, Addendum 1, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants: Main Report Section 6.3 'Transportation,' Table 9.1 'Summary of findings on NEPA issues for license renewal of nuclear power plants,' Draft for Comment" (February 1999).

DATES: Submit comments by April 27, 1997. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to consider them, but the Commission is able to ensure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

ADDRESSES: Copies of NUREG-1437, Vol. 1, Addendum 1 are available for the Reproduction and Distribution Services Section, OCIO, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

Comments may be sent to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, Mail Stop O16C1.

Deliver comments to: One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays.

Copies of comments received may be examined at: NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW. (Lower Level), Washington, DC.

You may also submit comments via the NRC's interactive rulemaking website through the NRC home page (<http://www.nrc.gov>). From the home page, select "Rulemaking" from the tool bar. The interactive rulemaking website can then be accessed by selecting "New Rulemaking Website." This site provides the ability to upload comments

as files (any format), if your web browser supports that function. For information about the interactive rulemaking web site, contact Ms. Carol Gallagher, telephone: 301-415-5905; e-mail cag@nrc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Donald P. Cleary, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone: 301-415-3903; e-mail: dpc@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On June 5, 1996 (61 FR 28467), the Commission published in the **Federal Register** a final rule amending its environmental protection regulations, 10 CFR Part 51, to improve the efficiency of the process of environmental review for applicants seeking to renew a nuclear power plant operating license for up to an additional 20 years. The amendment is based on the analyses reported in NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (May 1996). The rulemaking was initiated with the objective of improving the efficiency of the license renewal process drawing on the considerable experience of operating nuclear power reactors to generically assess many of the environmental impacts, to report the analyses and findings in NUREG-1437, and to codify the findings in the Commission's environmental protection regulations so that repetitive reviews of those impacts that are well understood could be avoided. In 61 FR 28467, the Commission stated that before the final rule became effective, the Commission was seeking comments on (1) the treatment of low-level waste storage and disposal impacts, (2) the cumulative radiological effects from the uranium fuel cycle, and (3) the effects from the disposal of high-level waste and spent fuel.

After considering the comments received on the rule, the Commission published the rule with minor nonsubstantive changes in the **Federal Register** on December 18, 1996 (61 FR 66537). In response to comments, the Commission stated that:

As part of its effort to develop regulatory guidance for this rule, the Commission will consider whether further changes to the rule are desirable to generically address: (1) The issue of cumulative transportation impacts and (2) the implications that the use of higher burn-up fuel have for the conclusions in Table S-4. After consideration of these issues, the Commission will determine whether the issue of transportation impacts should be changed to Category 1.

In NUREG-1437 and in the rule, Category 1 issues are those environmental issues for which the analysis and findings have been determined to be applicable to all nuclear power plants or to plants with specific types of cooling systems or other common plant or site characteristics. Absent new information that significantly changes the finding, these generic findings may be adopted in plant license renewal reviews. Category 2 issues are those environmental issues for which the analysis did not result in a finding common to all plants or to plants with common characteristics. Plant-specific reviews are required for Category 2 issues.

The NRC staff has completed analyses of these topics as reported in NUREG-1437, Vol. 1, Addendum 1, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants: Main Report Section 6.3—'Transportation,' Table 9.1 'Summary of findings on NEPA issues for license renewal of nuclear power plants,' Draft for Comment" (February 1999). Addendum 1 provides the bases for designating transportation of high-level waste a Category 1 issue. Addendum 1 would supplement the analysis and amend the findings and the Category 2 category designation for the issue of Transportation in Section 6.3 and Table 9.1 of NUREG-1437. These amendments to NUREG-1437 contain data supporting Table B-1 of Appendix B to Subpart A in 10 CFR Part 51.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 22nd day of February 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Annette L. Vietti-Cook,

Secretary of the Commission.

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