further evaluation of Environmental Justice concerns, as outlined in Executive Order 12898 and NRC's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards Policy and Procedures Letter 1–50, Revision 1, is not warranted.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to renew NRC Source Material License SUA–1341, for continued operation of the Irigaray and Christensen Ranch ISL facilities, as requested by COGEMA. Therefore, the principal alternatives available to NRC are to:

(1) Renew the license as requested by the licensee, with conditions considered necessary or appropriate to protect public health and safety and the environment; or

(2) Renew the license, with conditions considered necessary or appropriate to protect public health and safety and the environment, but not allow COGEMA to expand its operations beyond those previously approved; or

(3) Deny renewal of the license.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has concluded that the environmental impacts associated with the proposed action do not warrant either the limiting of COGEMA's future operations or the denial of the license renewal. Additionally, in the SER prepared for this action, the staff has reviewed the licensee's proposed action with respect to the criteria for license issuance specified in 10 CFR Part 40, Section 40.32, and has no basis for denial of the proposed action. Therefore, the staff considers that Alternative 1 is the appropriate alternative for selection.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The NRC staff has prepared an EA for the proposed renewal of NRC Source Material License SUA–1341. On the basis of this assessment, the NRC staff has concluded that the environmental impacts that may result from the proposed action would not be significant, and therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

The Environmental Assessment and other documents related to this proposed action are available for public inspection and copying at the NRC Public Document Room, in the Gelman Building (lower level), 2120 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20555.

Notice of Opportunity for Hearing

The Commission hereby provides notice that this is a proceeding on an application for a licensing action falling within the scope of Subpart L, ''Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials and Operators Licensing Proceedings,'' of the Commission's Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings and Issuance of Orders in 10 CFR Part 2. Pursuant to § 2.1205(a), any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing. In accordance with § 2.1205(c), a request for a hearing must be filed within thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this **Federal Register** notice. The request for a hearing must be filed with the Office of the Secretary either:

(1) By delivery to the Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff of the Office of the Secretary at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., Federal workdays; or

(2) By mail or telegram addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.

Each request for a hearing must also be served, by delivering it personally or by mail to:

(1) The applicant, COGEMA Mining, Inc., 935 Pendell Boulevard., P.O. Box 730, Mills, WY 82644;

(2) The NRC staff, by delivery to the Executive Director of Operations, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., Federal workdays; or

(3) By mail addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

In addition to meeting other applicable requirements of 10 CFR Part 2 of the Commission's regulations, a request for a hearing filed by a person other than an applicant must describe in detail:

(1) The interest of the requestor in the proceeding;

(2) How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding, including the reasons why the requestor should be permitted a hearing, with particular reference to the factors set out in § 2.1205(g);

(3) The requestor's areas of concern about the licensing activity that is the subject matter of the proceeding; and

(4) The circumstances establishing that the request for a hearing is timely in accordance with § 2.1205(c).

Any hearing request that is granted will be held in accordance with the Commission's ''Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials and Operator Licensing Proceedings'' in 10 CFR Part 2, Subpart L.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Daniel M. Gillen,

Assistant Chief, Uranium Recovery Branch, Division of Waste Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 98–16913 Filed 6–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–259.50–260 and 50–296]

Tennessee Valley Authority; Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, Units 1, 2 and 3 Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

Introduction

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC, the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–33, DPR–52 and DPR–68 issued to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA or the licensee) for operation of the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant (BFN), Units 1, 2 and 3, located in Limestone County, Alabama.

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 September 6, 1996 as supplemented June 6 and December 11, 1996; April 11, May 1, August 14, October 15, November 5 and 14, December 3, 4, 15, 22, 23, 29, and 30, 1997; January 23, March 12 and 13, April 16, 20, and 28, May 7, 14, 19 and 27, June 5 and 10, 1998. The proposed amendments will replace the current BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 Technical Specifications (CTS) in their entirety with Improved Technical Specifications (ITS) based on Revision 1 to NUREG–1433, ''Standard Technical Specifications General Electric Plants BWR/4,'' dated April 1995.

The Need for the Proposed Action

It has been recognized that nuclear safety in all plants would benefit from improvement and standardization of TS. 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), formalized this need. To facilitate the development of individual improved TS, each reactor vendor owners group (OG) and the NRC staff

developed standard TS (STS). For General Electric plants, the STS are published as NUREG–1433, and this document was the basis for the new BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 TS. The NRC Committee to Review Generic Requirements 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.

Description of the Proposed Change

The proposed revision to the TS is based on NUREG–1433 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–1433, 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 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 BFN Unit Nos. 1, 2 and 3 TS has undergone these types of changes. In order to ensure consistency, the NRC staff and the licensee have used NUREG–1433 as guidance to reformat and make other administrative changes.

2. Relocation of requirements, which include items that were in the existing BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 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 BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 TS to the Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR), appropriate plant-specific programs, procedures and ITS Bases follows the guidance of the General Electric STS (NUREG–1433). Once these items have been relocated by removing them from the TS 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 BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 ITS items that are either more conservative than corresponding requirements in the existing BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 TS, or are additional restrictions that are not in the existing BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 TS but are contained in NUREG–1433. Examples of more restrictive requirements include: placing a Limiting Condition of Operation 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 BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 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 BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 as will be described in the staff's Safety Evaluation (SE) 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–1433. 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 (61 FR 55026, 63 FR 29763, and 63 FR 32252). Where these changes represent a change to the current licensing basis for BFN Units 1, 2 and 3, they have been justified on a case-by-case basis and the environmental impacts of these changes will be addressed in the staff's SE to be issued with the license amendment.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed

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–1433 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 to 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 BFN Units 1, 2 and 3. Generic relaxations contained in NUREG–1433 as well as proposed deviations from NUREG–1433 have also been reviewed by the NRC staff and have been found to be acceptable.

In summary, the proposed revisions to the TS were 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 effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other nonradiological 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 amendments, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to this action would be to deny the request for the amendment. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of the BFN Units 1, 2 and 3 Electric Generating Plants.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on June 18, 1998, the staff consulted with the State official, Mr. David Walter, of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Radiation Protection. 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 amendment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendments dated September 6, 1996 as supplemented June 6, and December 11, 1996; April 11, May 1, August 14, October 15, November 5 and 14, December 3, 4, 15, 22, 23, 29, and 30, 1997; January 23, March 12 and 13, April 16, 20, and 28, May 7, 14, 19 and 27, and June 5 and 10, 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 Athens Public Library, 405 E. South Street, Athens, Alabama.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Frederick J. Hebdon,

Director, Project Directorate II–3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–17097 Filed 6–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

The Role of Industry Stakeholder Meeting

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The objective of the meeting is to obtain stakeholder insights into potential approaches or options the NRC could implement to more efficiently and effectively utilize consensus standards, industry initiatives that would be substitutes for regulatory action, and improvements to the regulatory framework. Plenary and breakout sessions will be held. Concurrent breakout sessions will provide a forum for discussion and feedback on (1) Consensus Codes and Standards Development and Endorsement/Use, (2) Industry Initiatives as Substitutes for Regulatory Action, and (3) Improvements to the Regulatory Framework.

DATES: Pre-registration will be August 31, 1998. The stakeholder meeting will be held on September 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The stakeholder meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare Hotel, 9300 West Bryn Mawr Avenue, Rosemont, Illinois, 60018. Telephone: (847) 696–1234, Facsimile: (847) 698–1039. (Refer to NRC Meeting for special conference rate.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For additional information contact: Thomas N. Cerovski, USNRC, Telephone: (301) 415–8099; FAX: (301) 415–5151; Internet: tnc@nrc.gov.

Participation

This conference is open to the general public; however, advance registration by August 1, 1998 is recommended. To register, contact: Thomas N. Cerovski, USNRC, Telephone: (301) 415–8099; Facsimile: (301) 415–5151; Internet: tnc@nrc.gov.

Program

Following is the preliminary program for the meeting:

August 31, 1998

Pre-Registration 5:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

September 1, 1998

Registration—7:00 a.m.–8:00 am.
Plenary Session—Opening and Welcome—8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.
Morning Breakout Sessions (I, II, and III)—9:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Lunch—11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Afternoon Breakout Sessions (I, II, and III)—1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.
Plenary Session—Closing and Summary—4:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

* * * * *

The agenda for each breakout session is as follows:

Breakout Session I: Codes and Standards Development and Endorsement/Use

Open discussion is invited on the following topics:

(1) Actions the NRC is taking to implement PL 104–113, ''National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995,'' March 7, 1996, (2) Options for NRC participation in the development of consensus codes and standards organizations,

(3) Whether the NRC should make greater use of available codes and standards in its regulations and regulatory guides,

(4) Options for endorsement/use of codes and standards, including potential changes regarding requirements for licensees to upgrade every 120-months to the latest ASME Code edition and addenda incorporated by reference in § 50.55a,

(5) Options for a process to interact with standards development organizations to discuss potential needs for new codes, standards, and guides and recommendations for areas of emphasis,

(6) Impediments to the adoption of updated codes and standards.

Breakout Session II: Industry Initiatives as Substitutes for Regulatory Action

Open discussion is invited on the proposed NRC review process of industry initiatives as substitutes for regulatory action:

A. Proposed process to be used by the NRC for review of industry initiatives:

(1) Industry submittal: defines parameters of issue, schedule, resources, end products,

(2) Acceptance review by NRC: resources, public access, fees, monitoring activities, enforcement policy,

(3) Detailed technical review by NRC: maintenance of desired level of safety and boundary conditions relative to agency policy.

B. Discussion of the process:

(1) Process will be used to determine whether an industry initiative can be relied on as an adequate and effective substitute for NRC regulatory activities:

a. Is the process workable from a conceptual perspective?

b. Should it be refined or more clearly defined?

(2) Are there similar processes which have been developed by public agencies or the governments of other countries from which the NRC could learn?