NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Sunshine Act Meeting

''FEDERAL REGISTER'' CITATION OF PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT: Vol. 63, No. 134/Tuesday, July 14, 1998.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED TIME AND DATE: 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, July 21, 1998.

CHANGE IN MEETING: A majority of the Board Members determined by recorded vote that the business of the Board required amending the agenda to delete the following item:

6808A: Pipeline Accident Summary Report: National Gas Pipeline Rupture and Fire During Dredging, Tiger Pass, Louisiana, October 23, 1996.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Rhonda Underwood, (202) 314–6065.

Dated: July 17, 1998.

Rhonda Underwood,

Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–387 and 50–388]

Pennsylvania Power and Light Company; Susquehanna Steam Electric Plants, Units 1 and 2 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 Nos. NPF–14 and NPF–22, issued to Pennsylvania Power and Light Company, (the licensee), for operation of the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES), Units 1 and 2, located in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to the licensee's application dated August 1, 1996, as supplemented by letters dated November 26, 1997, January 6, March 2, April 24, and June 18, 1998. The proposed amendments will replace the SSES, Units 1 and 2, Current Technical Specifications (CTSs) in their entirety with Improved Technical Specifications (ITSs) 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 Technical Specifications (TS). The Commission's ''NRC Interim Policy Statement on Technical Specification Improvements for Nuclear Power Reactors,'' (52 Fed. Reg. 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 TSs, 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 SSES, Units 1 and 2 TSs. The NRC Committee to Review Generic Requirements (CRGR) 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 TSs is based on NUREG–1433 and on guidance provided in the Final Policy Statement. Its objective is to completely rewrite, reformat, and streamline the CTS. 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 the NUREG, portions of the CTS 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 CTS, 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 operators personnel. They are purely editorial in nature or involve the movement or reformatting of requirements without affecting technical content. Every section of the SSES, Units 1 and 2 CTS 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 includes items that were in the SSES, Units 1 and 2 CTS. The CTS items that are being relocated to licensee-controlled documents are not required to be in the TSs 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 TSs. 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 SSES, Units 1 and 2, CTS 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 CTS 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 SSES, Units 1 and 2 ITSs items that are either more conservative than corresponding requirements in the SSES, Units 1 and 2, CTS or are additional restrictions that are not in the SSES, Units 1 and 2, CTS, but are contained in NUREG–1433. Examples of more restrictive requirements include: placing a Limiting Condition of Operation (LCO) on plant equipment that is not required by the CTS to be operable; more restrictive requirements to restore inoperable equipment; and more restrictive surveillance requirements.

4. Less restrictive requirements are relaxations of corresponding requirements in the SSES, Units 1 and 2, CTS 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 SSES, Units 1 and 2, as will be described in the staff's Safety Evaluation 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 CTS 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 56972) published in the **Federal**