Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (*i.e.*, the ''no-action'' alternative). Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Salem Nuclear Generating Station dated April 1973.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on September 14, 1999, the staff consulted with the New Jersey State official, Mr. Dennis Zannoni, Chief of the Bureau of Nuclear Engineering, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments with respect to the environmental impact of the proposed action. However, the State commented that certain proposed corrections were no longer relevant due to previous amendments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of 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 action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated November 14, 1997, as supplemented by letter dated August 25, 1999, 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 Salem Free Public Library, 112 West Broadway, Salem, NJ 08079.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 14th day of October, 1999.

Patrick D. Milano, Sr.,

Project Manager, Section 2, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99–27361 Filed 10–19–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Public Workshop On Revising The Reactor Safety Goal Policy

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of public workshop.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering modifying the reactor Safety Goal Policy Statement that was issued in 1986. Modifications are being considered for three reasons: (1) To change or add to the basic policy established in the statement; (2) to clarify the role of safety goals in the NRC's regulatory process; and (3) to make the policy statement consistent with our current agency practices. NRC is soliciting public comments on modifications that are being considered.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NRC's Safety Goal Policy Statement was originally published in 1986 after several years of consideration. The Commission provided additional guidance in a Staff Requirements Memorandum issued June 15, 1990. The current Safety Goal Policy contains two qualitative safety goals defined as follows:

- Individual members of the public should be provided a level of protection from the consequences of nuclear power plant operation such that individuals bear no significant additional risk to life and health.
- Societal risks to life and health from nuclear power plant operation should be comparable to or less than the risks from generating electricity by viable competing technologies and should not be a significant addition to other societal risks.

Two quantitative health objectives (QHOs) associated with the qualitative goals are also provided and are defined as:

- The risk to an average individual in the vicinity of a nuclear power plant of prompt fatalities that might result from reactor accidents should not exceed one-tenth of one percent (0.1 percent) of the sum of prompt fatality risks resulting from other accidents to which members of the U.S. population are generally exposed.
- The risk to the population in the area near a nuclear power plant of cancer fatalities that might result from nuclear power plant operation should not exceed one-tenth of one percent (0.1 percent) of the sum of cancer fatality risks resulting from all other causes.

In the document SECY–98–101 dated May 4, 1998 (available from the NRC web site at *http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/COMMISSION/SECYS/1998–101scy*), the staff discussed several issues relevant to changing the Safety Goal Policy Statement. The descriptions of these issues are provided below. The NRC is soliciting feedback regarding these issues, specifically with respect to:

- Should the policy statement be revised to address these issues?
- What are the benefits of such revisions?
- What are the detriments of such revisions?
- What alternatives should be considered to address these issues?

Other specific questions will be made available on the NRC web site at (*http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/wwwforms.html*) two weeks prior to the workshop.

Changes or Additions to Basic Policy Established in the Statement

1. Core damage frequency is now considered a subsidiary objective to the quantitative health objectives (QHOs). It may be appropriate to elevate it to a fundamental safety goal.

2. The second qualitative goal and QHO deal with societal risk. However, these measures of societal risk differ in two key respects from the societal risk calculations performed in other areas:

- The policy statement defines a 10-mile radius for calculating societal impacts, while the Regulatory Analysis Guidelines and environmental impact analyses use a 50 mile radius.
- The calculational process used by the staff for comparison with the QHO is an average-individual risk, while the Regulatory Analysis Guidelines and environmental analyses use a summed risk (over all individuals).

Should the Safety Goal Policy be revised to better reflect societal risk?

3. The goals and QHOs are described in terms of health risks; no goal has been established with respect to potential land contamination or other environmental impacts. As evidenced by the Chernobyl accident, this can be a major societal impact of accidents involving core damage and containment failure. Should such a goal be added?

4. The QHOs are expressed in terms of annual average frequencies. It may be appropriate to also provide a quantitative goal on risks during temporary plant configurations such as during PWR mid-loop operations, where risk can be substantially higher for a short period of time. Should such a goal be included in the Safety Goal Policy Statement?

Clarifications on the Role of Safety Goals in NRC's Regulatory Process

5. In a June 15, 1990, SRM, the Commission provided guidance to the

staff that the safety goals were to be used to define ''how safe is safe enough.'' (In that SRM, the Commission characterized ''how safe is safe enough'' as ''how far [the staff] should go when proposing safety enhancements, including those to be considered under the Backfit Rule.'') The policy statement itself does not include this guidance. Should it be added?

6. Recognizing recent progress in risk-informed regulatory activities, should discussion of the relationship between the safety goals and these activities be considered for inclusion in the policy statement?

7. The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) discussed the potential use of safety goals to define the adequate protection concept. Should such a definition be pursued?

8. The policy statement mentions defense-in-depth but does not define it. Should the policy be expanded to provide more guidance on the extent and nature of defense-in-depth?

Changes To Make the Statement Consistent With Current Practices

9. Two issues were identified in the staff's recent risk-informed regulatory guidance development activities, and discussed as policy issues in SECY–96–218, dated October 11, 1996, and SECY–97–287, dated December 12, 1997:

- Plant-specific application of safety goals, including a containment performance guideline derived from the QHOs (and defined in terms of a large early release frequency (LERF)).
- Treatment of uncertainties in plant-specific, risk-informed decisionmaking. It may be appropriate to discuss the resolution of these issues in the Safety Goal Policy Statement.

10. The current policy statement contains a proposed general plant performance guideline of 10^{-6} per reactor year for a large release of radioactive material. In SECY–93–138 the staff documented its conclusion that such a guideline would be significantly more restrictive than the QHOs. The staff further recommended that work to develop such a guideline be terminated. The Commission approved this recommendation in a June 10, 1993, SRM. Therefore, removal of this general plant performance guideline from the policy statement should be considered.

Workshop Meeting Information

The Commission intends to conduct a workshop to solicit information related to the revising the reactor safety goal. Persons other than NRC staff and NRC contractors interested in making a presentation at the workshop should notify Joseph Murphy, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, MS–T10 F12, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555–0001, (301–415–5670), email: jam1@nrc.gov

Date: November 9, 1999.

Agenda: Preliminary agenda is as follows (a final agenda will be available at the workshop):

9:00 a.m. Introduction
9:30–10:15 Overview of issues
10:15–10:30 Break
10:30–12:00 Discussion of specific questions
12:00–1:00 Lunch break
1:00–2:30 Discussion of specific questions (continued)
2:30–2:45 Break
2:45–4:00 Discussion of specific questions (continued)
4:00–5:00 Wrap-up discussion

Location: Doubletree Hotel, 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville Maryland 20852, (301–468–1100).

Registration: No registration fee for workshop; however, notification of attendance is requested so that adequate space, etc., for the workshop can be arranged. Notification of attendance should be directed to Joseph Murphy, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, MS: T10–F12, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555–0001, (301) 415–5670, email: jam1@nrc.gov

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph Murphy, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, MS: T10 F12, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555–0001, (301) 415–5670, email: jam1@nrc.gov

Dated this 14th day of October 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Thomas L. King,

Director, Division of Risk Analysis and Applications, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

[FR Doc. 99–27363 Filed 10–19–99; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

NRC To Hold Public Meetings on Spent Fuel Shipping Cask Accident Studies

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting on spent nuclear fuel transportation studies.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is initiating a study on spent nuclear fuel cask responses to severe transportation accidents. NRC previously studied this issue in the 1980s (see NUREG/CR–4829 and NUREG/BR–0111, called the ''modal study''). The modal study looked at possible rail and highway accidents and concluded that spent nuclear fuel cask designs would survive nearly all transportation accidents without releasing radioactive material to the environment. Over the next few years NRC will revisit the conclusions of the 1987 modal study to assure their continued validity. Risk insights obtained using modern analysis techniques, physical testing, and through interaction with stakeholders and the public, will support NRC's ongoing efforts to assure that its regulatory actions are risk-informed and effective. Ongoing public interactions throughout this project will help ensure that public concerns are effectively identified and understood, and that the project is designed considering these issues.

As the first step, NRC will conduct public meetings with the general public with the goal of having open, constructive discussions by stakeholders so that the NRC can listen to and better understand any public concerns regarding spent nuclear fuel transport package safety. Francis X. Cameron, Special Counsel for Public Liaison, in the Commission's Office of the General Counsel, will be the convenor and facilitator for the meetings.

DATES: Two public meetings will be held. The first will be held in Bethesda, MD, on November 17, 1999, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The second will be held in Henderson, NV, on December 8, 1999, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with an evening session from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The location of the first meeting is the Bethesda Hyatt Hotel, One Bethesda Metro (7400 Wisconsin Avenue), Bethesda, MD. The second meeting will be held at the Henderson Convention Center, 200 Water Street, Henderson, NV.

INFORMATION: Contact Francis X. Cameron, Special Counsel for Public Liaison, Office of the General Counsel, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington DC, 20555–0001, Telephone: 301–415–1642.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The risk of transporting highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel from nuclear power plants to a centralized storage facility or to an underground repository is an issue that has recently received increased NRC and public attention because of the increase in the number of shipments that will occur if and when such facilities begin operating. Risk to the public from transportation accidents depends on accident rates, number of