

September 20, 1988

Docket No. 50-320

Mr. F. R. Standerfer
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SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT -
EXEMPTIONS FROM REQUIREMENTS OF 10 CFR PART 55 "OPERATORS' LICENSES"
(TAC 67037)

Enclosed is the Environmental Assessment which relates in part to your request dated December 28, 1967, for exemptions from certain requirements pertaining to the use of simulators and from hourly watchstanding requirements contained in 10 CFR Part 55 for Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 2.

This assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

original signed by

Michael T. Masnik, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-4
Division of Reactor Projects I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
GPU NUCLEAR CORPORATION
DOCKET NO. 50-320
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING
OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 55, Operators' Licenses, relative to Facility Operating License No. DPR-73, issued to GPU Nuclear Corporation (the licensee), for the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station Unit 2 (TMI-2), located in Londonderry Township, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. By Order for Modification of License, dated July 20, 1979, the licensee's authority to operate the facility was suspended and the licensee's authority was limited to maintenance of the facility in the present shutdown cooling mode (44 FR 45271). By further Order of the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, dated February 11, 1980, a new set of formal license requirements was imposed to reflect the post-accident condition of the facility and to assure the continued maintenance of the current safe, stable, long-term cooling condition of the facility (45 FR 11292). The license provides, among other things, that it is subject to all rules, regulations and Orders of the Commission now or hereafter in effect.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of Proposed Action:

The actions being considered by the Commission are exemptions from 10 CFR Part 55 pertaining to the requirement to administer operating tests for operators and senior operators in a simulation facility and an exemption from the hourly watchstanding requirements to maintain an operator's license.

Exemption from the requirement to administer operating tests for operators and senior operators in a simulation facility would eliminate the licensee's need for an NRC approved or certified simulation facility. Exemptions would be granted with regard to simulator requirements to sections 10 CFR 55.45(b), Implementation - (1) Administration, 10 CFR 55.45(b)(2) Schedule for facility licensees, 10 CFR 55.45(b)(4) Application for and approval of simulation facilities, 10 CFR 55.45(b)(5) Certification of simulation facilities, and 10 CFR 55.59(a)(2) Requalification requirements.

A reduction in the hourly watchstanding requirements to maintain an operating license also requires an exemption since the regulations specify the number of hours required. The exemption would allow the licensee to reduce the hourly watchstanding requirement for maintenance of an operator's license from seven 8-hour shifts or five 12-hour shifts to four 8-hour shifts per quarter. The exemption would also permit the licensee to reduce from 40 hours to two 8-hour shifts the watchstanding requirements necessary to reinstate a licensed operator who fails to meet the quarterly watchstanding requirement. Exemptions would be granted, conditioned on the revised hourly watchstanding requirements, to sections 10 CFR 55.53(e) and 10 CFR 55.53(f).

The Need for the Proposed Action:

TMI-2 is currently in a post-accident, cold shutdown, long-term recovery mode, with sufficient decay heat removal assured by direct heat loss from the reactor coolant system to the reactor building atmosphere.

The licensee has requested exemptions to the requirements that licensed operators utilize a simulation facility when taking an operating test. Due to the unique cold shutdown, partially defueling condition of TMI-2, there is no plant-referenced simulator or simulation facility that reflects the current condition of TMI-2. The time to design, procure, install, and begin to operate a simulation facility would exceed the period of time in which licensed operators would be required at the facility. Furthermore, due to the changing nature of the cleanup effort, any design of a simulator would be quickly outdated. The use of the facility as a simulation facility is not practical since this would require facility manipulations not authorized by the facility license.

Exemption will be granted to 10 CFR 55.45(b)(1), 10 CFR 55.45(b)(2), 10 CFR 55.45(b)(4), 10 CFR 55.45(b)(5) and 10 CFR 55.59(a)(2) to the extent that the regulations require a simulation facility or the use of a simulation facility to grant or maintain operator's licenses.

The licensee also has requested a reduction in the hourly watchstanding requirements to maintain an operator's license. This requested reduction also requires an exemption. Current requirements specify the number of hours a licensed operator must actively perform the functions of an operator or senior

operator in a calendar quarter. These requirements were based on the assumption that the operators would be controlling an operating facility which is not the case at TMI-2. The TMI-2 operators function largely to prevent a criticality in a reactor in which the potential for a criticality is greatly reduced from operating facilities. Furthermore, the potential for recriticality at TMI-2 decreases on an almost daily basis as defueling progresses. In contrast to operating facilities TMI-2 is essentially in a static mode with little change from day to day. The principal operator activity is monitoring various plant parameters to assure the continued safe shutdown of the facility and assist the ongoing decontamination and defueling activities. The NRC staff recognizes that a reduction in the hourly watchstanding requirements is warranted.

Based on a review of the operator licensing requirements the NRC staff finds that reducing the hourly watchstanding requirements for maintenance of an operators license to four 8-hour shifts per quarter appropriate. Further the staff finds that if a licensed operator fails to meet the quarterly requirement, then before resumption of functions authorized by a license the licensee must complete a minimum of two 8-hour shifts.

Therefore an exemption would be granted to the requirements of 10 CFR 55.53(e) and 10 CFR 55.53(f) to the extent that it reduces the hourly watchstanding requirements to the hours specified above.

Environmental Impact of the Proposed Action:

The staff has evaluated the proposed exemptions and concludes that in light of the current and future condition of the facility described above, there are no significant radiological or nonradiological impacts to the environment as a result of this action. The exemptions remove the specific training requirements which are no longer applicable to the TMI-2 configuration.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in connection with the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for TMI-2, dated March 1981.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's request. No other agencies or persons were consulted.

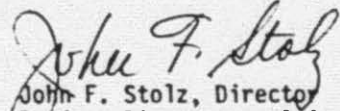
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption. Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, we conclude that this action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the letter from GPUK dated December 28, 1987 which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., and the State Library of Pennsylvania, Government Publications Section, Education Building, Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 20th day of September 1988.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


John F. Stolz, Director
Project Directorate 1-4
Division of Reactor Projects 1/11