

February 20, 2001

LICENSEE: AmerGen Energy Company, LLC (AmerGen)

FACILITY: Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station (Oyster Creek)

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF DECEMBER 20, 2000, MEETING WITH AMERGEN ENERGY COMPANY, LLC ON OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

On December 20, 2000, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) held a meeting open to the public with AmerGen Energy Company, LLC (AmerGen), the licensee for Oyster Creek. The meeting, held at the NRC Headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, was to meet the new AmerGen management, discuss licensing issues and effective communications. Each of the issues on the agenda will be discussed in more detail below. Enclosure 1 is a copy of the agenda used for the meeting. The meeting was scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. However, because of inclement weather, the AmerGen representatives arrived around 10:00 a.m. Therefore, the agenda was modified slightly and the discussion of the deferred items and future licensing actions will occur at a future meeting on the status of licensing actions. Enclosure 2 is a list of the meeting participants. Enclosure 3 is a copy of the licensee's handout used at the meeting to discuss the new AmerGen organization. Enclosure 4 is a copy of the handout used to discuss milestones in the review of licensing actions.

Below is a summary of the discussion for the key areas on the agenda.

Introduction

During the introduction, the NRC distributed the "Public Feedback Forms" to the members of the public present at the meeting. Also, the purpose of the meeting was to reach a better understanding of the need for quality and timely submittals and to discuss the need for better communications.

Discussion of the New Organization

The Amergen representatives discussed the new organization. They discussed the organization from the GENCo CEO level to the AmerGen licensing level with AmerGen staff both at the AmerGen Headquarters and at the Oyster Creek site. The discussion of the new organization was very productive because it helped to enlighten the paths of responsibility and communication within AmerGen.

Discussion of Timely Communications

There was a very successful discussion on the need for timely communications both for routine issues but especially for emerging issues. The NRC staff discussed several emerging issues which had to be handled on an extremely urgent basis and the lessons learned from those events to improve future interactions and in a more timely manner to engage the NRC staff at

Headquarters. For example, as recently as this past Veteran's Day holiday in November 2000, the NRC staff had to work for 40 hours during the holiday weekend on an emerging action. The NRC staff emphasized the need for early discussions to alert the staff and to have the technical representatives on standby. This would also allow the NRC staff time to research previous precedent-setting actions, study drawings and become familiar with the issue and the regulatory requirements associated with the issue. Also, early interactions would facilitate the discussions on focusing on the key issues at hand associated with the urgent action. Timely interactions with the NRC would in turn enable the NRC to respond in an expeditious manner and be prepared to evaluate the situation at hand. A discussion followed that in addition to the need to have both technical, legal, and NRC staff available, there was a need for administrative, technical, and clerical support resources. For example, if the NRC's Agencywide Document Access Management System (ADAMS) electronic document control system is down, it may affect the timeliness of accessing previous and current documents.

Discussion of the Quality and Timeliness of Submittals

In the past, the former licensee, GPU Nuclear, Inc., sent submittals which the staff received about 6 weeks after the date of the correspondence. This time lag had an impact on the staff's review schedule and timeliness of completing actions within the NRC's goal of 1 year. The NRC staff discussed with AmerGen the important milestones needed to be met in achieving the agency's goal of less than 1 year for a licensing action to be completed.

The staff also discussed how the quality of submittals impacts the effectiveness of the review. For example, in the past if the submittal did not contain an adequate technical justification for the revision or an adequate discussion for a no significant hazards determination, the project manager would have to write the determination or additional information would have been necessary, thereby, extending the review time.

AmerGen representatives stated that they have incorporated this action into their corrective action program and will pursue ways to improve the timeliness of submitting the submittals and the quality of the information contained within the submittals.

Also, AmerGen will improve on the timeliness of the submittals in giving the NRC some lead time for review. For example, in the fall 2000 outage 11 licensing actions were needed to be completed within a 2-to 3-month time period to support the outage and plant restart. AmerGen representatives stated that they will plan ahead and provide submittals to allow generally NRC lead review time of 12 months.

Public Feedback Forms

The NRC has started a new practice of issuing forms at the beginning of meetings to receive some feedback on its meetings. Copies of the forms are included in Enclosure 5. The forms are reviewed by the NRC staff to improve its meetings. The public feedback forms received for this meeting indicate that the purpose of the meeting was clear and it was met, there was sufficient notification, and people's questions were answered completely and clearly.

Conclusion

The meeting was very successful in discussing its organizations expectations, needs, and experience in improving communication to be more timely. Also, it clarified issues for the quality and timeliness of the licensee's submittals. The NRC staff will continue to monitor the timeliness and quality of submittals, planning for submitting applications in a planned and thoughtful manner, and improving communications.

/RA/

Helen N. Pastis, Senior Project Manager, Section 1
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Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-219

Enclosures: 1. Agenda
2. List of Meeting Participants
3. AmerGen handouts
4. NRC Handout for Review Milestones
5. Public Feedback Forms

cc w/encls: See next page

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MEETING WITH AMERGEN

LICENSING ISSUES

DECEMBER 20, 2000

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