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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of Louisiana Energy Services, LP
Docket No. 70-3103-ML Official Exhibit No. LES/28-M
OFFERED by Applicant Licensee Intervenor _____
NRC Staff Other _____

IDENTIFIED on 3/6/06 Witness Panel LES Criticality

Action Taken: ADMITTED REJECTED WITHDRAWN
Reported/Clerk Bethany Engel

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2006 APR -3 PM 3:45

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ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

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5.0 NUCLEAR CRITICALITY SAFETY

The Nuclear Criticality Safety Program for the National Enrichment Facility (NEF) is in accordance with U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Regulatory Guide 3.71, Nuclear Criticality Safety Standards for Fuels and Material Facilities (NRC, 1998). Regulatory Guide 3.71 (NRC, 1998) provides guidance on complying with the applicable portions of NRC regulations, including 10 CFR 70 (CFR, 2003a), by describing procedures for preventing nuclear criticality accidents in operations involving handling, processing, storing, and transporting special nuclear material (SNM) at fuel and material facilities. The facility is committed to following the guidelines in this regulatory guide for specific ANSI/ANS criticality safety standards with the exception of ANSI/ANS-8.9-1987, "Nuclear Criticality Safety Criteria for Steel-Pipe Intersections Containing Aqueous Solutions of Fissile Material." Piping configurations containing aqueous solutions of fissile material will be evaluated in accordance with ANSI/ANS-8.1-1998 (ANSI, 1998a), using validated methods to determine subcritical limits.

The information provided in this chapter, the corresponding regulatory requirements, and the section of NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), Chapter 5 in which the NRC acceptance criteria are presented is summarized below.

Information Category and Requirement	10 CFR 70 Citation	NUREG-1520 Chapter 5 Reference
Section 5.1 Nuclear Criticality Safety (NCS) Program		
Management of the NCS Program	70.61(d) 70.64(a)	5.4.3.1
Control Methods for Prevention of Criticality	70.61	5.4.3.4.2
Safe Margins Against Criticality	70.61	5.4.3.4.2
Description of Safety Criteria	70.61	5.4.3.4.2
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Section 5.3 Criticality Accident Alarm System (CAAS)		
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Section 5.4 Reporting		
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5.1 THE NUCLEAR CRITICALITY SAFETY (NCS) PROGRAM

The facility has been designed and will be constructed and operated such that a nuclear criticality event is prevented, and to meet the regulatory requirements of 10 CFR 70 (CFR, 2003a). Nuclear criticality safety at the facility is assured by designing the facility, systems and components with safety margins such that safe conditions are maintained under normal and abnormal process conditions and any credible accident. Items Relied On For Safety (IROFS) identified to ensure subcriticality are discussed in the NEF Integrated Safety Analysis Summary.

5.1.1 Management of the Nuclear Criticality Safety (NCS) Program

The NCS criteria in Section 5.2, Methodologies and Technical Practices, are used for managing criticality safety and include adherence to the double contingency principle as stated in the ANSI/ANS-8.1-1998, Nuclear Criticality Safety In Operations with Fissionable Materials Outside Reactors (ANSI, 1998a). The adopted double contingency principle states "process design should incorporate sufficient factors of safety to require at least two unlikely, independent, and concurrent changes in process conditions before a criticality accident is possible." Each process that has accident sequences that could result in an inadvertent nuclear criticality at the NEF meets the double contingency principle. The NEF meets the double contingency principle in that process design incorporates sufficient factors of safety to require at least two unlikely, independent, and concurrent changes in process conditions before a criticality accident is possible.

Using these NCS criteria, including the double contingency principle, low enriched uranium enrichment facilities have never had an accidental criticality. The plant will produce no greater than 5.0 % enrichment. However, as additional conservatism, the nuclear criticality safety analyses are performed assuming a ^{235}U enrichment of 6.0 %, except for Contingency Dump System traps which are analyzed assuming a ^{235}U enrichment of 1.5 %, and include appropriate margins to safety. In accordance with 10 CFR 70.61(d) (CFR, 2003b), the general criticality safety philosophy is to prevent accidental uranium enrichment excesses, provide geometrical safety when practical, provide for moderation controls within the UF_6 processes and impose strict mass limits on containers of aqueous, solvent based, or acid solutions containing uranium. Interaction controls provide for safe movement and storage of components. Plant and equipment features assure prevention of excessive enrichment. The plant is divided into six distinctly separate Assay Units (called Cascade Halls) with no common UF_6 piping. UF_6 blending is done in a physically separate portion of the plant. Process piping, individual centrifuges and chemical traps other than the contingency dump chemical traps, are safe by limits placed on their diameters. Product cylinders rely upon uranium enrichment, moderation control and mass limits to protect against the possibility of a criticality event. Each of the liquid effluent collection tanks that hold uranium in solution is mass controlled, as none are geometrically safe. As required by 10 CFR 70.64(a) (CFR, 2003c), by observing the double contingency principle throughout the plant, a criticality accident is prevented. In addition to the double contingency principle, effective management of the NCS Program includes:

- An NCS program to meet the regulatory requirements of 10 CFR 70 (CFR, 2003a) will be developed, implemented, and maintained.

- Safety parameters and procedures will be established.
- The NCS program structure, including definition of the responsibilities and authorities of key program personnel will be provided.
- The NCS methodologies and technical practices will be kept applicable to current configuration by means of the configuration management function. The NCS program will be upgraded, as necessary, to reflect changes in the ISA or NCS methodologies and to modify operating and maintenance procedures in ways that could reduce the likelihood of occurrence of an inadvertent nuclear criticality.
- The NCS program will be used to establish and maintain NCS safety limits and NCS operating limits for IROFS in nuclear processes and a commitment to maintain adequate management measures to ensure the availability and reliability of the IROFS.
- NCS postings will be provided and maintained current.
- NCS emergency procedure training will be provided.
- The NCS baseline design criteria requirements in 10 CFR 70.64(a) (CFR, 2003c) will be adhered to.
- The NCS program will be used to evaluate modifications to operations, to recommend process parameter changes necessary to maintain the safe operation of the facility, and to select appropriate IROFS and management measures.
- The NCS program will be used to promptly detect NCS deficiencies by means of operational inspections, audits, and investigations. Deficiencies will be entered into the corrective action program so as to prevent recurrence of unacceptable performance deficiencies in IROFS, NCS function or management measures.
- NCS program records will be retained as described in Section 11.7, Records Management.

Training will be provided to individuals who handle nuclear material at the facility in criticality safety. The training is based upon the training program described in ANSI/ANS-8.20-1991, Nuclear Criticality Safety Training (ANSI, 1991). The training program is developed and implemented with input from the criticality safety staff, training staff, and management. The training focuses on the following:

- Appreciation of the physics of nuclear criticality safety.
- Analysis of jobs and tasks to determine what a worker must know to perform tasks efficiently.
- Design and development of learning objectives based upon the analysis of jobs and tasks that reflect the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by the worker.
- Implementation of revised or temporary operating procedures.

Additional discussion of management measures is provided in Chapter 11, Management Measures.

5.1.2 Control Methods for Prevention of Criticality

The major controlling parameters used in the facility are enrichment control, geometry control, moderation control, and/or limitations on the mass as a function of enrichment. In addition, reflection, interaction, and heterogeneous effects are important parameters considered and applied where appropriate in nuclear criticality safety analyses. Nuclear Criticality Safety Evaluations and Analyses are used to identify the significant parameters affected within a particular system. All assumptions relating to process, equipment, material function, and operation, including credible abnormal conditions, are justified, documented, and independently reviewed. Where possible, passive engineered controls are used to ensure NCS. The determination of the safe values of the major controlling parameters used to control criticality in the facility is described below.

Moderation control is in accordance with ANSI/ANS-8.22-1997, Nuclear Criticality Safety Based on Limiting and Controlling Moderators (ANSI, 1997). However, for the purposes of the criticality analyses, it is assumed that UF_6 comes in contact with water to produce aqueous solutions of UO_2F_2 as described in Section 5.2.1.3.3, Uranium Accumulation and Moderation Assumption. A uniform aqueous solution of UO_2F_2 and a fixed enrichment are conservatively modeled using MONK8A (SA, 2001) and the JEF2.2 library. Criticality analyses were performed to determine the maximum value of a parameter to yield $k_{eff} = 1$. The criticality analyses were then repeated to determine the maximum value of the parameter to yield a $k_{eff} = 0.95$. Table 5.1-1, Safe Values for Uniform Aqueous Solution of Enriched UO_2F_2 , shows both the critical and safe limits for 5.0 % and 6.0 %.

Table 5.1-2, Safety Criteria for Buildings/ Systems/Components, lists the safety criteria of Table 5.1-1, Safe Values for Uniform Aqueous Solutions of Enriched UO_2F_2 , which are used as control parameters to prevent a nuclear criticality event. Although the NEF will be limited to 5.0 % enrichment, as additional conservatism, the values in Table 5.1-2, Safety Criteria for Buildings/Systems/ Components, represent the limits based on 6.0 % enrichment except for the Contingency Dump System traps which are limited to 1.5 % ^{235}U .

The values on Table 5.1-1 are chosen to be critically safe when optimum light water moderation exists and reflection is considered within isolated systems. The conservative modeling techniques provide for more conservative values than provided in ANSI/ANS-8.1 (ANSI, 1998a). The product cylinders are only safe under conditions of limited moderation and enrichment. In such cases, both design and operating procedures are used to assure that these limits are not exceeded.

All Separation Plant components, which handle enriched UF_6 , other than the Type 30B and 48Y cylinders and the first stage UF_6 pumps and contingency dump chemical traps, are safe by geometry. Centrifuge array criticality is precluded by a probability argument with multiple operational procedure barriers. Total moderator or H/U ratio control as appropriate precludes product cylinder criticality.

In the Technical Services Building (TSB) criticality safety for uranium loaded liquids is ensured by limiting the mass of uranium in any single tank to less than or equal to 12.2 kg U (26.9 lb U). Individual liquid storage bottles are safe by volume. Interaction in storage arrays is accounted for.

Based on the criticality analyses, the control parameters applied to NEF are as follows:

Enrichment

Enrichment is controlled to limit the percent ^{235}U within any process, vessel, or container, except the contingency dump system, to a maximum enrichment of 5 % ^{235}U . The design of the contingency dump system controls enrichment to a limit of 1.5 % ^{235}U . Although NEF is limited to a maximum enrichment of 5 % ^{235}U , as added conservatism nuclear criticality safety is analyzed using an enrichment of 6 % ^{235}U .

Geometry/Volume

Geometry/volume control may be used to ensure criticality safety within specific process operations or vessels, and within storage containers.

The geometry/volume limits are chosen to ensure $k_{\text{eff}} (k_{\text{calc}} + 3 \sigma_{\text{calc}}) \leq 0.95$.

The safe values of geometry/volume define the characteristic dimension of importance for a single unit such that nuclear criticality safety is not dependent on any other parameter assuming 6 % ^{235}U for safety margin.

Moderation

Water and oil are the moderators considered in NEF. At NEF the only system where moderation is used as a control parameter is in the product cylinders. Moderation control is established consistent with the guidelines of ANSI/ANS-8.22-1997 (ANSI, 1997) and incorporates the criteria below:

- Controls are established to limit the amount of moderation entering the cylinders.
- When moderation is the only parameter used for criticality control, the following additional criteria are applied. These controls assure that at least two independent controls would have to fail before a criticality accident is possible.
 - Two independent controls are utilized to verify cylinder moderator content.
 - These controls are established to monitor and limit uncontrolled moderator prior to returning a cylinder to production thereby limiting the amount of uncontrolled moderator from entering a system to an acceptable limit.
 - The evaluation of the cylinders under moderation control includes the establishment of limits for the ratio of maximum moderator-to-fissile material for both normal operating and credible abnormal conditions. This analysis has been supported by parametric studies.
- When moderation is not considered a control parameter, either optimum moderation or worst case H/U ratio is assumed when performing criticality safety analysis.

Mass

Mass control may be utilized to limit the quantity of uranium within specific process operations, vessels, or storage containers. Mass control may be used on its own or in combination with

other control methods. Analysis or sampling is employed to verify the mass of the material. Conservative administrative limits for each operation are specified in the operating procedures.

Whenever mass control is established for a container, records are maintained for mass transfers into and out of the container. Establishment of mass limits for a container involves consideration of potential moderation, reflection, geometry, spacing, and enrichment. The evaluation considers normal operations and credible abnormal conditions for determination of the operating mass limit for the container and for the definition of subsequent controls necessary to prevent reaching the safety limits. When only administrative controls are used for mass controlled systems, double batching is conservatively assumed in the analysis.

Reflection

Reflection is considered when performing Nuclear Criticality Safety Evaluations and Analyses. The possibility of full water reflection is considered but the layout of the NEF is a very open design and it is highly unlikely that those vessels and plant components requiring criticality control could become flooded from a source of water within the plant. In addition, neither automatic sprinkler nor standpipe and hose systems are provided in the TSB, Separation Buildings, Blending and Liquid Sampling, CRDB, CAB, and Centrifuge Post Mortem areas. Therefore, full water reflection of vessels has therefore been discounted. However, some select analyses have been performed using full reflection for conservatism. Partial reflection of 2.5 cm (0.984 in) of water is assumed where limited moderating materials (including humans) may be present. It is recognized that concrete can be a more efficient reflector than water; therefore, it is modeled in analyses where it is present. When moderation control is identified in the ISA Summary, it is established consistent with the guidelines of ANSI/ANS-8.22-1997 (ANSI, 1997).

Interaction

Nuclear criticality safety evaluations and analyses consider the potential effects of interaction. A non-interacting unit is defined as a unit that is spaced an approved distance from other units such that the multiplication of the subject unit is not increased. Units may be considered non-interacting when they are separated by more than 60 cm (23.6 inches).

If a unit is considered interacting, nuclear criticality safety analyses are performed. Individual unit multiplication and array interaction are evaluated using the Monte Carlo computer code MONK8A to ensure $k_{\text{eff}} (k_{\text{calc}} + 3 \sigma_{\text{calc}}) < 0.95$.

Concentration, Density and Neutron Absorbers

NEF does not use mass concentration, density, or neutron absorbers as a criticality control parameter.

5.1.3 Safe Margins Against Criticality

Process operations require establishment of criticality safety limits. The facility UF_6 systems involve mostly gaseous operations. These operations are carried out under reduced atmospheric conditions (vacuum) or at slightly elevated pressures not exceeding three atmospheres. It is highly unlikely that any size changes of process piping, cylinders, cold traps, or chemical traps under these conditions, would lead to a criticality situation because a volume or mass limit may be exceeded.

Within the Separations Building, significant accumulations of enriched UF_6 reside only in the Product Low Temperature Take-off Stations, Product Liquid Sampling Autoclaves, Product Blending System or the UF_6 cold traps. All these, except the UF_6 cold traps, contain the UF_6 in 30B and 48Y cylinders. All these significant accumulations are within enclosures protecting them from water ingress. The facility design has minimized the possibility of accidental moderation by eliminating direct water contact with these cylinders of accumulated UF_6 . In addition, the facility's stringent procedural controls for enriching the UF_6 assure that it does not become unacceptably hydrogen moderated while in process. The plant's UF_6 systems operating procedures contain safeguards against loss of moderation control (ANSI, 1997). No neutron poisons are relied upon to assure criticality safety.

5.1.4 Description of Safety Criteria

Each portion of the plant, system, or component that may possibly contain enriched uranium is designed with criticality safety as an objective. Table 5.1-2, Safety Criteria for Buildings/ Systems/Components, shows how the safety criteria of Table 5.1-1, Safe Values for Uniform Aqueous Solutions of Enriched UO_2F_2 , are applied to the facility to prevent a nuclear criticality event. Although the NEF will be limited to 5.0 % enrichment, as additional conservatism, the values in Table 5.1-2, represent the limits based on 6.0 % enrichment.

Where there are significant in-process accumulations of enriched uranium as UF_6 , the plant design includes multiple features to minimize the possibilities for breakdown of the moderation control limits. These features eliminate direct ingress of water to product cylinders while in process.

5.1.5 Organization and Administration

The criticality safety organization is responsible for implementing the Nuclear Criticality Safety Program. During the design phase, the criticality safety function is performed within the design engineering organization. The criticality safety function for operations is described in the following section.

The criticality safety organization reports to the Health, Safety, and Environment (HS&E) Manager as described in Chapter 2, Organization and Administration. The HS&E Manager is accountable for overall criticality safety of the facility, is administratively independent of production responsibilities, and has the authority to shut down potentially unsafe operations.

Designated responsibilities of the criticality safety staff include the following:

- Establish the Nuclear Criticality Safety Program, including design criteria, procedures, and training
- Provide criticality safety support for integrated safety analyses and configuration control
- Assess normal and credible abnormal conditions
- Determine criticality safety limits for controlled parameters
- Develop and validate methods to support nuclear criticality safety evaluations (NCSEs) (i.e., non-calculation engineering judgments regarding whether existing criticality safety analyses bound the issue being evaluated or whether new or revised safety analyses are required)

- Perform NCS analyses (i.e., calculations), write NCS evaluations, and approve proposed changes in process conditions on equipment involving fissionable material
- Specify criticality safety control requirements and functionality
- Provide advice and counsel on criticality safety control measures, including review and approval of operating procedures
- Support emergency response planning and events
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Nuclear Criticality Safety Program using audits and assessments
- Provide criticality safety postings that identify administrative controls for operators in applicable work areas.

The minimum qualifications for a criticality safety engineer are a Bachelor of Science (BS) or Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in science or engineering with at least two years of nuclear industry experience in criticality safety. A criticality safety engineer must understand and have experience in the application and direction of criticality safety programs. The HS&E Manager has the authority and responsibility to assign and direct activities for the criticality safety staff. The criticality safety engineer is responsible for implementation of the NCS program. Criticality safety engineers will be provided in sufficient numbers to implement and support the operation of the NCS program.

The NEF implements the intent of the administrative practices for criticality safety, as contained in Section 4.1.1 of American National Standards Institute/American Nuclear Society (ANSI/ANS)-8.1-1998, Nuclear Criticality Safety in Operations with Fissionable Materials Outside Reactors (ANSI, 1998a). A policy will be established whereby personnel shall report defective NCS conditions and perform actions only in accordance with written, approved procedures. Unless a specific procedure deals with the situation, personnel shall report defective NCS conditions and take no action until the situation has been evaluated and recovery procedures provided.

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5.2 METHODOLOGIES AND TECHNICAL PRACTICES

This section describes the methodologies and technical practices used to perform the Nuclear Criticality Safety (NCS) analyses and NCS evaluations. The determination of the NCS controlled parameters and their application and the determination of the NCS limits on IROFS are also presented.

5.2.1 Methodology

MONK8A (SA, 2001) is a powerful Monte Carlo tool for nuclear criticality safety analysis. The advanced geometry modeling capability and detailed continuous energy collision modeling treatments provide realistic 3-dimensional models for an accurate simulation of neutronic behavior to provide the best estimate neutron multiplication factor, k-effective. Complex models can be simply set up and verified. Additionally, MONK8A (SA, 2001) has demonstrable accuracy over a wide range of applications and is distributed with a validation database comprising critical experiments covering uranium, plutonium and mixed systems over a wide range of moderation and reflection. The experiments selected are regarded as being representative of systems that are widely encountered in the nuclear industry, particularly with respect to chemical plant operations, transportation and storage. The validation database is subject to on-going review and enhancement. A categorization option is available in MONK8A (SA, 2001) to assist the criticality analyst in determining the type of system being assessed and provides a quick check that a calculation is adequately covered by validation cases.

5.2.1.1 Methods Validation

The validation process establishes method bias by comparing measured results from laboratory critical experiments to method-calculated results for the same systems. The verification and validation processes are controlled and documented. The validation establishes a method bias by correlating the results of critical experiments with results calculated for the same systems by the method being validated. Critical experiments are selected to be representative of the systems to be evaluated in specific design applications. The range of experimental conditions encompassed by a selected set of benchmark experiments establishes the area of applicability over which the calculated method bias is applicable. Benchmark experiments are selected that resemble as closely as practical the systems being evaluated in the design application.

The extensive validation database contains a number of experiments applicable to this application involving low and intermediate-enriched uranium. The MONK8A (SA, 2001) code with the JEF2.2 library was validated against these experiments which are provided in the International Handbook of Evaluated Criticality Safety Benchmark Experiments (NEA, 2002) and NUREG/CR-1071 (NRC, 1980). The experiments chosen are provided in Table 5.2-1, Uranium Experiments Used for Validation, along with a brief description. The overall mean calculated value from these 93 configurations is 1.0017 ± 0.0045 and the results are provided in the MONK8A Validation and Verification report (AREVA, 2006).

MONK8A is distributed in ready-to-run executable form. This approach provides the user with a level of quality assurance consistent with the needs of safety analysis. The traceability from source code to executable code is maintained by the code vendor.

In accordance with the guidance in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), code validation for the specific application has been performed (AREVA, 2006). Specifically, the experiments provided in Table 5.2-1, Uranium Experiments Used for Validation, were calculated and documented in the MONK8A Validation and Verification report (AREVA, 2006) for the National Enrichment Facility. In addition, the MONK8A Validation and Verification report (AREVA, 2006) satisfies the commitment to ANSI/ANS-8.1-1998 (ANSI, 1998a) and includes details of computer codes used, operations, recipes for choosing code options (where applicable), cross sections sets, and any numerical parameters necessary to describe the input.

The MONK8A computer code and JEF2.2 library are within the scope of the Quality Assurance Program.

5.2.1.2 Limits on Control and Controlled Parameters

The validation process established a bias by comparing calculations to measured critical experiments. With the bias determined, an upper safety limit (USL) can be determined using the following equation from NUREG/CR-6698, Guide for Validation of Nuclear Criticality Safety Calculational Methodology (NRC, 2001):

$$USL = 1.0 + \text{Bias} - \sigma_{\text{Bias}} - \Delta_{\text{SM}} - \Delta_{\text{AOA}}$$

Where the critical experiments are assumed to have a k_{eff} of unity, and the bias was determined by comparison of calculation to experiment. From Section 5.2.1.1, Methods Validation, the bias is positive and since a positive bias may be non-conservative, the bias is set to zero. The σ_{Bias} from the MONK8A Validation and Verification (AREVA, 2006) is 0.0085 and a value of 0.05 is assigned to the subcritical margin, Δ_{SM} . The term Δ_{AOA} is an additional subcritical margin to account for extensions in the area of applicability. Since the experiments in the benchmark are representative of the application, the term Δ_{AOA} is set to zero for systems and components not associated with the Contingency Dump System. For the Contingency Dump System, it was necessary to extrapolate the area of applicability to include 1.5% enrichment and the term Δ_{AOA} is set to 0.0014 to account for this extrapolation. Thus, the USL becomes:

- " $USL = 1 - 0 - 0.0085 - 0.05 = 0.9415$ (for systems and components NOT associated with the Contingency Dump System)
- " $USL = 1 - 0 - 0.0085 - 0.05 - 0.0014 = 0.9401$ (for the Contingency Dump System)

NUREG/CR-6698 (NRC, 2001) indicates that the following condition be demonstrated for all normal and credible abnormal operating conditions:

$$k_{\text{calc}} + 2 \sigma_{\text{calc}} < USL$$

The risk of an accidental criticality resulting from NEF operations is inherently low. The low risk warrants the use of an alternate approach.

At the low enrichment limits established for the NEF, sufficient mass of enriched uranic material cannot be accumulated to achieve criticality without moderation. Uranium in the centrifuge plant is inherently a very dry, unmoderated material. Centrifuge separation operations at NEF do not include solutions of enriched uranium. For most components that form part of the centrifuge plant or are connected to it, sufficient mass of moderated uranium can only accumulate by

reaction between UF_6 and moisture in air leaking into plant process systems, leading to the accumulation of uranic breakdown material. Due to the high vacuum requirements for the normal operation of the facility, air in-leakage into the process systems is controlled to very low levels and thus the highly moderated condition assumed represents an abnormal condition. In addition, excessive air in-leakage would result in a loss of vacuum which in turn would cause the affected centrifuges to crash (self destruct) and the enrichment process in the affected centrifuges to stop. As such, buildup of additional mass of moderated uranic breakdown material such that component becomes filled with sufficient mass of enriched uranic material for criticality is precluded. Even when accumulated in large UF_6 cylinders or cold traps, neither UF_6 nor UO_2F_2 can achieve criticality without moderation at the low enrichment limit established for the NEF.

Therefore, due to the low risk of accidental criticality associated with NEF operations and the margin that exists in the design and operation of the NEF with respect to nuclear criticality safety, any uncertainty in reactivity calculations associated with methodology, data, and bias is bounded and a margin of subcriticality for safety of 0.05 (i.e. $k_{eff} = k_{calc} + 3\sigma_{calc} < 0.95$) is adequate to ensure subcriticality is maintained under normal and abnormal credible conditions. As such, the NEF will be designed using the equation:

$$k_{eff} = k_{calc} + 3 \sigma_{calc} < 0.95$$

5.2.1.3 General Nuclear Criticality Safety Methodology

The NCS analyses results provide values of k-effective (k_{eff}) to conservatively meet the upper safety limit. The following sections provide a description of the major assumptions used in the NCS analyses.

5.2.1.3.1 Reflection Assumption

The layout of the NEF is a very open design and it is not considered credible that those vessels and plant components requiring criticality control could become flooded from a source of water within the plant. Full water reflection of vessels has therefore been discounted. However, where appropriate, spurious reflection due to walls, fixtures, personnel, etc. has been accounted for by assuming 2.5 cm (0.984 in) of water reflection around vessels.

5.2.1.3.2 Enrichment Assumption

The NEF will operate with a 5.0 % ^{235}U enrichment limit. However, the nuclear criticality safety calculations used an enrichment of 6.0 % ^{235}U . This assumption provides additional conservatism for plant design.

5.2.1.3.3 Uranium Accumulation and Moderation Assumption

Most components that form part of the centrifuge plant or are connected to it assume that any accumulation of uranium is taken to be in the form of a uranyl fluoride/water mixture at a maximum H/U atomic ratio of 7 (exceptions are discussed in the associated nuclear criticality safety analyses documentation). The ratio is based on the assumption that significant quantities of moderated uranium could only accumulate by reaction between UF_6 and moisture in air leaking into the plant. Due to the high vacuum requirements of a centrifuge plant, in-leakage is

controlled at very low levels and thus the H/U ratio of 7 represents an abnormal condition. The maximum H/U ratio of 7 for the uranyl fluoride-water mixture is derived as follows:

The stoichiometric reaction between UF_6 and water vapor in the presence of excess UF_6 can be represented by the equation:



Due to its hygroscopic nature, the resulting uranyl fluoride is likely to form a hydrate compound. Experimental studies (Lychev, 1990) suggest that solid hydrates of compositions $\text{UO}_2\text{F}_2 \cdot 1.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ and $\text{UO}_2\text{F}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ can form in the presence of water vapor, the former composition being the stable form on exposure to atmosphere.

It is assumed that the hydrate $\text{UO}_2\text{F}_2 \cdot 1.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ is formed and, additionally, that the hydrogen fluoride (HF) produced by the UF_6 /water vapor reaction is also retained in the uranic breakdown to give an overall reaction represented by:



For the MONK8A (SA, 2001) calculations, the composition of the breakdown product was simplified to $\text{UO}_2\text{F}_2 \cdot 3.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ that gives the same H/U ratio of 7 as above.

In the case of oils, UF_6 pumps and vacuum pumps use a fully fluorinated perfluorinated polyether (PFPE) type lubricant, often referred to by the trade name "Fomblin." Mixtures of UF_6 and PFPE oil would be a less conservative case than a uranyl fluoride/water mixture, since the maximum HF solubility in PFPE is only about 0.1 %/o. Therefore, the uranyl fluoride/water mixture assumption provides additional conservatism in this case.

5.2.1.3.4 Vessel Movement Assumption

The interaction controls placed on movement of vessels containing enriched uranium are specified in the facility procedures. In general, any item in movement (an item being either an individual vessel or a specified batch of vessels) must be maintained at 60 cm (23.6 in) edge separation from any other enriched uranium, and that only one item of each type, e.g., one trap and one pump, may be in movement at one time. These spacing restrictions are relaxed for vessels being removed from fixed positions. In this situation, one vessel may approach an adjacent fixed plant vessel/component without spacing restrictions.

5.2.1.3.5 Pump Free Volume Assumption

There are two types of pumps used in product and dump systems of the plant:

- The vacuum pumps (product and dump) are rotary vane pumps. In the enrichment plant fixed equipment, these are assumed to have a free volume of 14 L (3.7 gal) and are modeled as a cylinder in MONK8A (SA, 2001). This adequately covers all models likely to be purchased.
- The UF_6 pumping units are a combination unit of two pumps, one 500 m^3/hr (17,656 ft^3/hr) pump with a free volume of 8.52 L (2.25 gal) modeled as a cylinder, and a larger 2000 m^3/hr (70,626 ft^3/hr) pump which is modeled explicitly according to manufacturer's drawings.

5.2.1.4 Nuclear Criticality Safety Analyses

Nuclear criticality safety is analyzed for the design features of the plant system or component and for the operating practices that relate to maintaining criticality safety. The analysis of individual systems or components and their interaction with other systems or components containing enriched uranium is performed to assure the criticality safety criteria are met. The nuclear criticality safety analyses and the safe values in Table 5.1-1, Safe Values for Uniform Aqueous Solution of Enriched UO_2F_2 , provide a basis for the plant design and criticality hazards identification performed as part of the Integrated Safety Analysis.

Each portion of the plant, system, or component that may possibly contain enriched uranium is designed with criticality safety as an objective. Table 5.1-2, Safety Criteria for Buildings/Systems/Components, shows how the safe values of Table 5.1-1, are applied to the facility design to prevent a nuclear criticality event. The NEF is designed and operated in accordance with the parameters provided in Table 5.1-2. The Integrated Safety Analysis reviewed the facility design and operation and identified Items Relied On For Safety to ensure that criticality does not pose an unacceptable risk.

Where there are significant in-process accumulations of enriched uranium as UF_6 the plant design includes multiple features to minimize the possibilities for breakdown of the moderation control limits. These features eliminate direct ingress of water to product cylinders while in process.

Each NCS analysis includes, as a minimum, the following information.

- A discussion of the scope of the analysis and a description of the system(s)/process(es) being analyzed.
- A discussion of the methodology used in the criticality calculations, which includes the validated computer codes and cross section library used and the k_{eff} limit used (0.95).
- A discussion of assumptions (e.g. reflection, enrichment, uranium accumulation, moderation, movement of vessels, component dimensions) and the details concerning the assumptions applicable to the analysis.
- A discussion on the system(s)/process(es) analyzed and the analysis performed, including a description of the accident or abnormal conditions assumed.
- A discussion of the analysis results, including identification of required limits and controls.

During the design phase of NEF, the NCS analysis is performed by a criticality safety engineer and independently reviewed by a second criticality safety engineer. During the operation of NEF, the NCS analysis is performed by criticality safety engineer, independently reviewed by a second criticality safety engineer and approved by the HS&E Manager. Only qualified criticality safety engineers can perform NCS analyses and associated independent review.

5.2.1.5 Additional Nuclear Criticality Safety Analyses Commitments

The NEF NCS analyses were performed using the above methodologies and assumptions. NCS analyses also meet the following:

- NCS analyses are performed using acceptable methodologies.

- Methods are validated and used only within demonstrated acceptable ranges.
- The analyses adhere to ANSI/ANS-8.1-1998 (ANSI, 1998a) as it relates to methodologies.
- The validation report statement in Regulatory Guide 3.71 (NRC, 1998) is as follows: LES has demonstrated (1) the adequacy of the margin of safety for subcriticality by assuring that the margin is large compared to the uncertainty in the calculated value of k_{eff} , (2) that the calculation of k_{eff} is based on a set of variables whose values lie in a range for which the methodology used to determine k_{eff} has been validated, and (3) that trends in the bias support the extension of the methodology to areas outside the area or areas of applicability.
- A specific reference to (including the date and revision number) and summary description of either a manual or a documented, reviewed, and approved validation report for each methodology are included. Any change in the reference manual or validation report will be reported to the NRC by letter.
- The reference manual and documented reviewed validation report will be kept at the facility.
- The reference manual and validation report are incorporated into the configuration management program.
- The NCS analyses are performed in accordance with the methods specified and incorporated in the configuration management program.
- The NCS methodologies and technical practices in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), Section 5.4.3.4, are used to analyze NCS accident sequences in operations and processes.
- The acceptance criteria in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), Section 3.4, as they relate to: identification of NCS accident sequences, consequences of NCS accident sequences, likelihood of NCS accident sequences, and descriptions of IROFS for NCS accident sequences are met.
- NCS controls and controlled parameters to assure that under normal and credible abnormal conditions, all nuclear processes are subcritical, including use of an approved margin of subcriticality for safety are used.
- As stated in ANSI/ANS-8.1-1998 (ANSI, 1998a), process specifications incorporate margins to protect against uncertainties in process variables and against a limit being accidentally exceeded.
- ANSI/ANS-8.7-1998 (ANSI, 1998b), as it relates to the requirements for subcriticality of operations, the margin of subcriticality for safety, and the selection of controls required by 10 CFR 70.61(d) (CFR, 2003b), is used.
- ANSI/ANS-8.10-1983 (ANSI, 1983b), as modified by Regulatory Guide 3.71 (NRC, 1998), as it relates to the determination of consequences of NCS accident sequences, is used.
- If administrative k_{eff} margins for normal and credible abnormal conditions are used, NRC pre-approval of the administrative margins will be sought.

- Subcritical limits for k_{eff} calculations such that: $k_{eff} \text{ subcritical} = 1.0 - \text{bias} - \text{margin}$, where the margin includes adequate allowance for uncertainty in the methodology, data, and bias to assure subcriticality are used.
- Studies to correlate the change in a value of a controlled parameter and its k_{eff} value are performed. The studies include changing the value of one controlled parameter and determining its effect on another controlled parameter and k_{eff} .
- The double contingency principle is met. The double contingency principle is used in determining NCS controls and IROFS.
- The acceptance criteria in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002) Section 3.4, as they relate to subcriticality of operations and margin of subcriticality for safety, are met.

5.2.1.6 Nuclear Criticality Safety Evaluations (NCSE)

For any change (i.e., new design or operation, or modification to the facility or to activities of personnel, e.g., site structures, systems, components, computer programs, processes, operating procedures, management measures), that involves or could affect uranium, a NCSE shall be prepared and approved. Prior to implementing the change, it shall be determined that the entire process will be subcritical (with approved margin for safety) under both normal and credible abnormal conditions. If this condition cannot be shown with the NCSE, either a new or revised NCS analysis will be generated that meets the criteria, or the change will not be made.

The NCSE shall determine and explicitly identify the controlled parameters and associated limits upon which NCS depends, assuring that no single inadvertent departure from a procedure could cause an inadvertent nuclear criticality and that the safety basis of the facility will be maintained during the lifetime of the facility. The evaluation ensures that all potentially affected uranic processes are evaluated to determine the effect of the change on the safety basis of the process, including the effect on bounding process assumptions, on the reliability and availability of NCS controls, and on the NCS of connected processes.

The NCSE process involves a review of the proposed change, discussions with the subject matter experts to determine the processes which need to be considered, development of the controls necessary to meet the double contingency principle, and identification of the assumptions and equipment (e.g., physical controls and/or management measures) needed to ensure criticality safety.

Engineering judgment of the criticality safety engineer is used to ascertain the criticality impact of the proposed change. The basis for this judgment is documented with sufficient detail in the NCSE to allow the independent review by a second criticality safety engineer to confirm the conclusions of the judgment of results. Each NCSE includes, as a minimum, the following information.

- A discussion of the scope of the evaluation, a description of the system(s)/process(es) being evaluated, and identification of the applicable nuclear criticality safety analysis.
- A discussion to demonstrate the applicable nuclear criticality safety analysis is bounding for the condition evaluated.

- A discussion of the impact on the facility criticality safety basis, including effect on bounding process assumptions, on reliability and availability NCS controls, and on the nuclear criticality safety of connected system(s)/process(es).
- A discussion of the evaluation results, including (1) identification of assumptions and equipment needed to ensure nuclear criticality safety is maintained and (2) identification of limits and controls necessary to ensure the double contingency principle is maintained.

The NCSE is performed and documented by a criticality safety engineer. Once the NCSE is completed and the independent review by a criticality safety engineer is performed and documented, the HS&E Manager approves the NCSE. Only criticality safety engineers who have successfully met the requirements specified in the qualification procedure can perform NCSEs and associated independent review.

The above process for NCSEs is in accordance with ANSI/ANS-8.19-1996 (ANSI, 1996).

5.2.1.7 Additional Nuclear Criticality Safety Evaluations Commitments

NCSEs also meet the following:

- The NCSEs are performed in accordance with the procedures specified and incorporated in the configuration management program.
- The NCS methodologies and technical practices in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), Sections 5.4.3.4.1(10)(a), (b), (d) and (e), are used to evaluate NCS accident sequences in operations and processes.
- The acceptance criteria in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002), Section 3.4, as they relate to: identification of NCS accident sequences, consequences of NCS accident sequences, likelihood of NCS accident sequences, and descriptions of IROFS for NCS accident sequences are met.
- NCS controls and controlled parameters to assure that under normal and credible abnormal conditions, all nuclear processes are subcritical, including use of an approved margin of subcriticality for safety are used.
- The double contingency principle is met. The double contingency principle is used in determining NCS controls and IROFS.
- The acceptance criteria in NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002) Section 3.4, as they relate to subcriticality of operations and margin of subcriticality for safety, are met.

5.3 CRITICALITY ACCIDENT ALARM SYSTEM (CAAS)

The facility is provided with a Criticality Accident Alarm System (CAAS) as required by 10 CFR 70.24, (CFR, 2003d). Areas where Special Nuclear Material (SNM) is handled, used, or stored in amounts at or above the 10 CFR 70.24 (CFR, 2003d) mass limits are provided with CAAS coverage. Emergency management measures are covered in the facility Emergency Plan.

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5.4 REPORTING

The following are NCS Program commitments related to event reporting:

- A program for evaluating the criticality significance of NCS events will be provided and an apparatus will be in place for making the required notification to the NRC Operations Center. Qualified individuals will make the determination of significance of NCS events. The determination of loss or degradation of IROFS or double contingency principle compliance will be made against the license and 10 CFR 70 Appendix A (CFR, 2003f).
- The reporting criteria of 10 CFR 70 Appendix A and the report content requirements of 10 CFR 70.50 (CFR, 2003g) will be incorporated into the facility emergency procedures.
- The necessary report based on whether the IROFS credited were lost, irrespective of whether the safety limits of the associated parameters were actually exceeded will be issued.
- If it cannot be ascertained within one hour of whether the criteria of 10 CFR 70 Appendix A (CFR, 2003f) Paragraph (a) or (b) apply, the event will be treated as a one-hour reportable event.

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5.5 REFERENCES

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- ANSI, 1998b. Guide for Nuclear Criticality Safety in the Storage of Fissile Materials, ANSI/ANS-8.7-1998, American National Standards Institute/American Nuclear Society, 1998.
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- CFR, 2003c. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 70.64, Requirements for new facilities or new processes at existing facilities, 2003.
- CFR, 2003d. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 70.24, Criticality accident requirements, 2003.
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- CFR, 2003f. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 70, Appendix A, Reportable Safety Events, 2003.
- CFR, 2003g. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 70.50, Reporting requirements, 2003.
- Lychev, 1990. Crystalline Hydrates of Uranyl Fluoride at 20°C, Lychev, Mikhalev and Suglobov. Journal of Soviet Radiochemistry, Vol 32, 1990.
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- NRC, 2001. Guide for Validation of Nuclear Criticality Safety Computational Methodology, NUREG/CR-6698, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, January 2001.

NRC, 2002. Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Fuel Cycle Facility, NUREG-1520, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, March 2002.

SA, 2001. Serco Assurance, ANSWERS Software Service, "Users Guide for Version 8 ANSWERS/MONK(98) 6," 1987-2001.

TABLES

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Table 5.1-1 Safe Values for Uniform Aqueous Solutions of Enriched UO_2F_2

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Parameter	Critical Value $k_{\text{eff}} = 1.0$	Safe Value $k_{\text{eff}} = 0.95$	Safety Factor
Values for 5.0 % enrichment			
Volume	28.9 L (7.6 gal)	21.6 L (5.7 gal)	0.75
Cylinder Diameter	26.2 cm (10.3 in)	23.6 cm (9.3 in)	0.90
Slab Thickness	12.6 cm (5.0 in)	10.7 cm (4.2 in)	0.85
Water Mass	17.3 kg H_2O (38.1 lb H_2O)	12.7 kg H_2O (28.0 lb H_2O)	0.73
Areal Density	11.9 g/cm ² (24.4 lb/ft ²)	9.8 g/cm ² (20.1 lb/ft ²)	0.82
Uranium Mass	37 kg U (81.6 lb U)		
- no double batching		26.6 kg U (58.6 lb U)	0.72
- double batching		16.6 kg U (36.6 lb U)	0.45
Values for 6.0 % enrichment			
Volume	24 L (6.3 gal)	18 L (4.8 gal)	0.75
Cylinder Diameter	24.4 cm (9.6 in)	21.9 cm (8.6 in)	0.90
Slab Thickness	11.5 cm (4.5 in)	9.9 cm (3.9 in)	0.86
Water Mass	15.4 kg H_2O (34.0 lb H_2O)	11.5 kg H_2O (25.4 lb H_2O)	0.75
Areal Density	9.5 g/cm ² (19.5 lb/ft ²)	7.5 g/cm ² (15.4 lb/ft ²)	0.79
Uranium Mass	27 kg U (59.5 lb U)		
- no double batching		19.5 kg U (43.0 lb U)	0.72
- double batching		12.2 kg U (26.9 lb U)	0.45

Table 5.1-2 Safety Criteria for Buildings/Systems/Components

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Building/System/Component	Control Mechanism	Safety Criteria
Enrichment	Enrichment	5.0 w/o (6 w/o ^{235}U used in NCS)
Centrifuges	Diameter	< 21.9 cm (8.6 in)
Product Cylinders (30B)	Moderation	H < 0.95 kg (2.09 lb)
Product Cylinders (48Y)	Moderation	H < 1.05 kg (2.31 lb)
UF ₆ Piping	Diameter	< 21.9 cm (8.6 in)
Chemical Traps	Diameter	< 21.9 cm (8.6 in)
Product Cold Trap	Diameter	< 21.9 cm (8.6 in)
Contingency Dump System Traps	Enrichment	1.5 w/o ^{235}U
Tanks	Mass	< 12.2 kg U (26.9 lb U)
Feed Cylinders	Enrichment	< 0.72 w/o ^{235}U
Uranium Byproduct Cylinders	Enrichment	< 0.72 w/o ^{235}U
UF ₆ Pumps (first stage)	N/A	Safe by explicit calculation
UF ₆ Pumps (second stage)	Volume	< 18.0 L (4.8 gal)
Individual Uranic Liquid Containers, e.g., Fomblin Oil Bottle, Laboratory Flask, Mop Bucket	Volume	< 18.0 L (4.8 gal)
Vacuum Cleaners Oil Containers	Volume	< 18.0 L (4.8 gal)

Table 5.2-1 Uranium Experiments Used for Validation

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MONK8A Case	Case Description	Number of Experiments	Handbook Reference
25	Low-enriched damp U_3O_8 powder in cubic aluminum cans	10	NUREG/CR-1071
42	Low-enriched damp UO_2 powder reflected by polyethylene	18	LEU-COMP-THERM-049
43	Low-enriched uranyl nitrate solutions	3	LEU-SOL-THERM-002
51	Low-enriched uranium solutions (new STACY experiments)	7	LEU-SOL-THERM-004
63	Boron carbide absorber rods in uranyl nitrate (5.6 % enriched)	3	LEU-SOL-THERM-005
69	Critical arrays of polyethylene-moderated $U(30)\text{F}_4$; Polytetrafluoroethylene one-inch cubes	29	LEU-COMP-THERM-001
71	STACY: 28 cm thick slabs of 10 % enriched uranyl nitrate solutions, water reflected	7	LEU-SOL-THERM-016
80	STACY: Unreflected 10 % enriched uranyl nitrate solution in a 60 cm diameter cylindrical tank	5	LEU-SOL-THERM-007
81	STACY: Concrete reflected 10 % enriched uranyl nitrate solution reflected by concrete	4	LEU-SOL-THERM-008
84	STACY: Borated concrete reflected 10 % enriched uranyl nitrate solution in a 60 cm diameter cylindrical tank	3	LEU-SOL-THERM-009
85	STACY: Polyethylene reflected 10 % enriched uranyl nitrate solution in a 60 cm diameter cylindrical tank	4	LEU-SOL-THERM-010

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