



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

SUPPORTING AMENDMENT NO. 13 TO FACILITY LICENSE NO. R-33

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY-NUCLEAR TEST REACTOR

DOCKET NO. 50-73

Introduction

By letter dated August 11, 1976, General Electric Company (the licensee or GE) requested amendment of the Technical Specifications (TS) appended to Facility License No. R-33 for the Nuclear Test Reactor (NTR). The change relates to the calibration surveillance requirements of all instruments which are required by the TS.

On November 29, 1976, the Commission published in the Federal Register an amended Section 20.103 of 10 CFR 20, which became effective on December 29, 1976. One effect of this revision was that in order to receive credit for limiting the inhalation of airborne radioactive material, respiratory protective equipment must be used as stipulated in Regulatory Guide 8.15. Another requirement of the amended regulation is that licensees authorized to make allowance for use of respiratory protective equipment prior to December 29, 1976, must bring the use of their respiratory protective equipment into conformance with Regulatory Guide 8.15 by December 29, 1977.

The licensee is presently authorized by the TS for the NTR to make allowance for use of respiratory protective equipment at that facility. The present program, however, differs from that stipulated in Regulatory Guide 8.15. In accordance with 10 CFR Part 20, if the licensee desires to receive credit for use of respiratory protective equipment at the NTR after December 28, 1977, such use must be as stipulated in Regulatory Guide 8.15 rather than as specified in the current TS.

Based on the revocation provision of the current TS on respiratory protection and with the licensee's concurrence, we advised the licensee that we would delete this specification in the proposed amendment of the TS for the NTR.

7812270415

Discussion

The current TS require that the instruments required by the TS be calibrated at least four times a year at approximately three month intervals. The proposed change would require that all instruments relating to reactor operation monitoring be calibrated at least four times a year at approximately three month intervals except during periods when the reactor is in a defueled condition. Prior to re-fueling of the reactor, the instrumentation would be calibrated and the normal calibration schedule would be resumed. The calibration schedule for radiation monitors and stack effluent monitors (except those for noble gases) would be maintained whether the reactor is fueled or not.

Evaluation

The evaluations relating to the proposed calibration schedule for instruments and the Respiratory Protection Program are discussed separately below.

A. Proposed Instrument Calibration Schedule

We have reviewed the proposed changes to the NTR TS and find that the instruments which would be affected by the change would not be in use during periods when there would be no fuel in the reactor. Calibration of such instruments when there is no fuel in the reactor serves no useful purpose and does not affect the margin of safety. The calibration schedule for other instruments, such as radiation monitoring instruments, would not be changed. We find that this proposed change would not decrease the margin of safety and is acceptable.

B. Deletion of Respiratory Protection

Deletion of current TS requirements, Section 9.7, regarding respiratory protection is necessary to eliminate conflict with 10 CFR §20.103, as revised November 29, 1976. This agrees with the revocation provision in Section 9.7.3 of the current TS which requires that Section 9.7 be revoked upon adoption of the proposed change to 10 CFR §20.103. In the future, as specified in the regulations, allowance may be made for the use of respiratory protective equipment only if its use is as stipulated in Regulatory Guide 8.15, Acceptable Programs for Respiratory Protection. Based on the above, we find this change acceptable.

Environmental Consideration

We have determined that this amendment will not result in any significant environmental impact and that it does not constitute a major Commission action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. We have also determined that this action is not one of those covered by 10 CFR §51.5(a) or (b). Having made these determinations, we have further concluded that, pursuant to 10 CFR §51.5(d)(4), an environmental impact statement or environmental impact appraisal and negative declaration need not be prepared in connection with issuance of this amendment.

Conclusion

We have concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) because the amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of accidents previously considered and does not involve a significant decrease in a safety margin, the amendment does not involve a significant hazards consideration, (2) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, and (3) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations and the issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Dated: December 14, 1978