



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 16, 2020

Dr. Partha Chowdhury, Director
Nuclear Radiation Laboratory
University of Massachusetts-Lowell
One University Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL – STATUS OF THE
REGULATORY AUDIT AND UPDATE REGARDING THE RENEWAL OF
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. R-125 (EPID NO. L-2015-RNW-0001)

Dear Dr. Chowdhury:

The University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) holds U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Facility Operating License No. R-125 for the operation of the UML Research Reactor (UMLRR). By application dated October 20, 2015 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML16042A015), as supplemented, UML applied for renewal of the UMLRR operating license.

By letter dated February 4, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20021A315), the NRC staff informed UML that it would conduct a regulatory audit beginning February 10, 2020, and continuing as necessary, and provided UML with an audit plan. The NRC staff began the regulatory audit to address open items remaining following its review of request for additional information (RAI) responses and other supplemental information submitted by UML in 2019 and 2020.

During the audit, UML stated that it would submit additional information supplementing its renewal application (including a follow-up technical specification submittal and other information) on the UML docket to address information needs identified by the NRC staff, to help eliminate the need for further RAIs. Additionally, UML stated that it would provide documents for NRC staff review on the online audit portal discussed in the audit plan. By letter dated April 27, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20114E059), the NRC staff provided UML with an update on the audit and renewal status, and stated that based on UML providing the information and documents by May 31, 2020, it expected to complete its review and make a final determination on the renewal request by September 30, 2020. During a teleconference on July 14, 2020, UML stated that based on its operational status during the audit (due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 public health emergency), it expected to need until at least July 31, 2020, to provide all the additional information on the docket. UML stated that its timeframe for submitting the information would continue to depend on its future operating status and staff availability, but that it would keep the NRC staff informed of any updates.

The NRC staff plans to keep the audit open at this time, to facilitate discussion of any questions that may arise as UML continues to prepare its supplemental information for submittal. As discussed in the NRC staff's letter dated February 4, 2020, the NRC staff will issue a regulatory audit summary following the completion of the audit. The summary will include a description of any information identified during the audit that will need to be docketed (if not already docketed) to supplement the application.

Based on UML submitting the information discussed above by July 31, 2020, the NRC staff is providing a revised date of November 30, 2020, by which it expects to complete its review and make a final determination on the renewal request. However, this date could still change due to several factors including a need for further RAs, unanticipated changes to the scope of the review, unsolicited supplements to the application for the renewal, and others. If the forecasted date changes, the NRC staff will notify you in writing of the new date and an explanation of the reason for the change.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-4067, or by electronic mail at Edward.Helvenston@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Edward Helvenston, Project Manager
Non-Power Production and Utilization Facility
Licensing Branch
Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-Power
Production and Utilization Facilities
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-223
License No. R-125

cc: See next page

University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Docket No. 50-223

cc:

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Test, Research and Training
Reactor Newsletter
Attention: Ms. Amber Johnson
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and Engineering
University of Maryland
4418 Stadium Drive
College Park, MD 20742-2115

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NRR-106

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