




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

March 1, 2022

MEMORANDUM TO: William B. Kennedy, Acting Chief
Advanced Reactor Licensing Branch
Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-Power
Production and Utilization Facilities
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: Richard Rivera, Project Manager  Signed by Rivera, Richard
Advanced Reactor Licensing Branch on 03/01/22
Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-Power
Production and Utilization Facilities
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF THE NOVEMBER 8, 2021, PUBLIC MEETING
BETWEEN THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
STAFF AND ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY TO DISCUSS THE
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT FOR THE MOLTEN SALT RESEARCH
REACTOR PROJECT

On November 8, 2021, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff held a virtual observation public meeting with representatives from Abilene Christian University (ACU). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the status of ACU's Molten Salt Research Reactor (MSRR) project and topics concerning the Environmental Report required for a Construction Permit (CP) application. The meeting notice can be found in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under Accession No. ML21301A173. ACU's presentation slides can be found in ADAMS under Accession No. ML21316A156. The enclosure to this document provides the list of meeting attendees.

The meeting began with ACU providing an overview of its MSRR project status and schedule. The ACU stated that it plans to submit an update of its current Regulatory Engagement Plan (REP), dated July 24, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20241A071), to the NRC. The ACU stated that it would be interested in having additional interactions with the NRC staff to better understand the general timeline for construction permit application reviews and to be able to use that information to update its REP.

The ACU stated that it plans to apply for initial licensing of the MSRR to operate at approximately 10 kilowatts-thermal, but that it could apply for subsequent license amendments to allow increases in the licensed power level.

CONTACT: Richard Rivera, NRR/DANU
(301) 415-7190

The ACU presented information regarding the site selection process that it followed to inform its decision to house the MSRR in its Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) building, currently under construction, and provided general information about this building. The ACU also discussed topics regarding the scope and depth of the required environmental report and the guidance documents that it plans to follow. The ACU stated that it intends to follow the guidance in NUREG-1537, "Guidelines for Preparing and Reviewing Applications for the Licensing of Non-Power Reactors" (ADAMS Accession Nos. ML042430055 and ML042430048, respectively), and would also consider guidance in NUREG-1748, "Environmental Review Guidance for Licensing Actions Associated with NMSS Programs" (ADAMS Accession No. ML032450279).

In response to the NRC staff's questions regarding the SERC, ACU stated that it would conduct other activities in the SERC besides MSRR operation, for example, other research not using the MSRR, and teaching. The ACU stated that SERC construction may be complete by the time a MSRR CP would be issued. The ACU also stated that it intends for the construction (and eventual demolition) of the SERC to be independent of the MSRR installation; ACU plans to complete the construction of the SERC regardless of whether a reactor will eventually be installed in the building.

The ACU stated that it would be interested in whether SERC construction and demolition would be considered connected actions for the NRC staff's environmental review for an MSRR CP application, given the "drop-in" design of the MSRR, and that the SERC construction and demolition would be independent of the MSRR. The ACU also stated that it would be interested in whether there could be any reason why the MSRR CP application review might require the NRC staff to prepare a detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), rather than an Environmental Assessment. The NRC staff noted that NRC regulations do not require an EIS for a research reactor CP, but the NRC staff could prepare one if they determined it to be necessary. The NRC staff stated that determinations regarding these items would be made during its environmental review.

The presentation from ACU also discussed the NRC staff's response, by letter dated April 26, 2021 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20365A022), to ACU's request for regulatory interpretation on Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Section 50.10 (10 CFR 50.10), "License required; limited work authorization," related to whether the SERC would be a building of the type described in 10 CFR 50.10(a)(2)(x).

Prior to the meeting conclusion, ACU stated that it plans to continue discussions with the NRC staff related to this topic and other pre-application activities.

Project No.: 99902088

Enclosure:
List of Attendees

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DATE: MARCH 1, 2022

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ADAMS Accession No.: ML21341B442**NRC-001**

OFFICE	NRR/DANU/UARL/PM	NRR/DANU/UAR/LA	NRR/DANU/UARL/BC (A)	NRR/DANU/UARL/PM
NAME	RRivera	CSmith (SLent for)	WKennedy	RRivera
DATE	12/8/2021	2/28/2022	2/28/2022	3/1/2022

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List of Attendees

Name	Organization
Rivera, Richard	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
Helvenston, Edward	NRC
Kennedy, William	NRC
Palmrose, Donald	NRC
Burnell, Scott	NRC
Davis, Jennifer	NRC
Harper, Richard	NRC
Young, Mitzi	NRC
Vokoun, Patricia	NRC
Roth, David	NRC
Wolf, Carolyn	NRC
Folk, Kevin	NRC
Vrahoretis, Susan	NRC
Tharakan, Binesh	NRC
Kreuzberger, Charles	NRC
Tony Hill	Abilene Christian University (ACU)
Rusty Towell	ACU
Adams, Alexander	ACU
Timothy Kennedy	ACU
Jordan Robison	ACU

Enclosure