

representation petitions arising within the counties of Culberson, El Paso and Hudspeth, in the El Paso Resident Office.

Dated, Washington, DC, May 30, 1995.

By Direction of the Board.

Joseph E. Moore,

Acting Executive Secretary.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-348 and 50-364]

Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-2 and NPF-8. These licenses are issued to the Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) and the Alabama Power Company for operation of the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2 (Farley), located in Houston County, Alabama.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed action is in accordance with the SNC's application dated April 3, 1995, for exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for Physical Protection of Licensed Activities in Nuclear Power Reactors Against Radiological Sabotage." The exemption would allow implementation of a hand geometry biometrics system to control site access at Farley so that photo identification badges for non-SNC employees that have been granted unescorted access into protected and vital areas may be taken offsite.

The Need for the Proposed Action

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, paragraph (a), SNC shall establish and maintain an onsite physical protection system and security organization. Regulation 10 CFR 73.55(d), "Access Requirements," paragraph (1), specifies that the "licensee shall control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area." Regulation 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) specifies that, "A numbered picture badge identification system shall be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escort." Regulation 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) also states that an individual

not employed by the licensee (i.e., contractors) may be authorized access to protected areas without escort provided the individual "receives a picture badge upon entrance into the protected area which must be returned upon exit from the protected area * * *."

Currently, unescorted access into protected areas at the Farley plant is controlled through the use of a photograph on a badge/keycard (hereafter referred to as a "badge"), which is stored at the access point when not in use. The security officers at each entrance station use the photograph on the badge to visually identify the individual requesting access. The badges for both SNC employees and contractor personnel who have been granted unescorted access are given to the individuals at the entrance location upon entry and are returned upon exit. In accordance with 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5), the badges are not allowed to be taken offsite.

Southern Nuclear proposes to implement an alternate unescorted access control system that would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges at the entry point and would allow all individuals with unescorted access to keep their badges when departing the site.

An exemption from 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) is required to permit contractors to take their badges offsite instead of returning them when exiting the site.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of SNC's application. Under the proposed system, each individual who is authorized unescorted access would have the physical characteristics of their hand (hand geometry) registered with their badge number in the access control system. When an individual enters the badge into the card reader and places the hand on the measuring surface, the system would record the individual's hand image. The unique characteristics of the hand image would be compared with the previously stored template to verify authorization for entry. Individuals, including SNC employees and contractors, would be allowed to keep their badge when departing the site.

Based on the Sandia report, "A Performance Evaluation of Biometric Identification Devices," SAND91-0276•UC-906, Unlimited Release, June 1991, that concluded hand geometry equipment possesses strong performance and high detection characteristics, and on its own experience with the current photo-

identification system, SNC determined that the proposed hand geometry system would provide the same level of assurance as the current system that access is only granted to authorized individuals. Since both the badge and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected areas, the proposed system would provide a positive verification process. Potential loss of a badge by an individual, as a result of taking the badge offsite, would not enable unauthorized entry into protected areas. Southern Nuclear has stated it will implement a process for periodically testing the proposed system to ensure continued overall level of performance equivalent to that specified in the regulation. The Physical Security Plan will be revised to include implementation and testing of the hand geometry access control system and to allow SNC employees and contractors to take their badges offsite.

Southern Nuclear has determined that the proposed hand geometry access control process for identifying personnel will provide the same high assurance objective regarding onsite physical protection as provided by the photo-identification process now in use.

The access process will continue to be under the observation of security personnel. A numbered picture badge identification system will continue to be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escorts. Badges will continue to be displayed by all individuals while inside the protected areas.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that this proposed action would result in no significant radiological environmental impacts. With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to operation of the Joseph M.

Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, dated June 1972.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy on May 11, 1995, the staff consulted with the Alabama State official, James McNees of the Alabama Department of Public Health, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption. Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the Commission has concluded that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the request for exemption dated April 3, 1995, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC at the local public document room located at the Houston-Love Memorial Library, 212 W. Burnshaw Street, Post Office Box 1369, Dothan, Alabama.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 30th day of May 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Herbert N. Berkow,

Director, Project Directorate II-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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Regulatory Guide; Issuance, Availability

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued for public comment a draft of a guide for its Regulatory Guide series. This series has been developed to describe and make available to the public such information as methods acceptable to the NRC staff for implementing specific parts of the Commission's regulations, techniques used by the staff in evaluating specific problems or postulated accidents, and data needed by the staff in its review of applications for permits and licenses.

The draft guide is temporarily identified by its Task Number, DG-0008 (which should be mentioned in all correspondence concerning this draft guide). DG-0008, "Applications for the Use of Sealed Sources in Portable Gauging Devices," is being developed to provide guidance to applicants and licensees in preparing applications for

new licenses, license amendments, and license renewals for the use of sealed sources in portable gauging devices.

This draft guide is being issued to involve the public in the early stages of the development of a regulatory position in this area. It has not received complete staff review and does not represent an official NRC staff position.

Public comments are being solicited on this draft guide. Comments should be accompanied by supporting data. Written comments may be submitted to the Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555. Comments will be most helpful if received by August 31, 1995.

Comments may be submitted electronically, in either ASCII text or Wordperfect format (version 5.1 or later), by calling the NRC Electronic Bulletin Board on FedWorld. The bulletin board may be accessed using a personal computer, a modem, and one of the commonly available communications software packages, or directly via Internet.

If using a personal computer and modem, the NRC subsystem on FedWorld can be accessed directly by dialing the toll free number: 1-800-303-9672. Communication software parameters should be set as follows: parity to none, data bits to 8, and stop bits to 1 (N,8,1). Using ANSI or VT-100 terminal emulation, the NRC NUREGs and RegGuides for Comment subsystem can then be accessed by selecting the "Rules Menu" option from the "NRC Main Menu." For further information about options available for NRC at FedWorld, consult the "Help/Information Center" from the "NRC Main Menu." Users will find the "FedWorld Online User's Guides" particularly helpful. Many NRC subsystems and databases also have a "Help/Information Center" option that is tailored to the particular subsystem.

The NRC subsystem on FedWorld can also be accessed by a direct dial phone number for the main FedWorld BBS, 703-321-8020, or by using Telnet via Internet, fedworld.gov. If using 703-321-8020 to contact FedWorld, the NRC subsystem will be accessed from the main FedWorld menu by selecting the "Regulatory, Government Administration and State System," then selecting "Regulatory Information Mall." At that point, a menu will be displayed that has an option "U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission" that will take you to the NRC Online main menu. The NRC Online area also can be accessed directly by typing "/go nrc" at

a FedWorld command line. If you access NRC from FedWorld's main menu, you may return to FedWorld by selecting the "Return to FedWorld" option from the NRC Online Main Menu. However, if you access NRC at FedWorld by using NRC's toll-free number, you will have full access to all NRC systems but you will not have access to the main FedWorld system.

If you contact FedWorld using Telnet, you will see the NRC area and menus, including the Rules menu. Although you will be able to download documents and leave messages, you will not be able to write comments or upload files (comments). If you contact FedWorld using FTP, all files can be accessed and downloaded but uploads are not allowed; all you will see is a list of files without descriptions (normal Gopher look). An index file listing all files within a subdirectory, with descriptions, is included. There is a 15-minute time limit for FTP access.

Although FedWorld can be accessed through the World Wide Web, like FTP that mode only provides access for downloading files and does not display the NRC Rules menu.

For more information on NRC bulletin boards call Mr. Arthur Davis, Systems Integration and Development Branch, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, telephone (301) 415-5780; e-mail AXD3@nrc.gov.

For more information on this Draft Regulatory Guide DG-0008, contact Ms. P.C. Vacca at the Office of the Nuclear Safety and Standards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, telephone (301) 415-7908; e-mail PCV@nrc.gov.

Although a time limit is given for comments on these drafts, comments and suggestions in connection with (1) items for inclusion in guides currently being developed or (2) improvements in all published guides are encouraged at any time.

Regulatory guides are available for inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street NW., Washington, DC. Requests for single copies of draft guides (which maybe reproduced) or for placement on an automatic distribution list for single copies of future draft guides in specific divisions should be made in writing to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Director, Distribution and Mail Service Section. Telephone requests cannot be accommodated. Regulatory guides are not copyrighted, and Commission approval is not required to reproduce them.

(5 U.S.C. 552(a))