

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 extracted hand image would be compared with the previously stored template to verify authorization for entry. Individuals, including licensee employees and contractors, would be allowed to keep their badge with them when they depart the site.

Based on a Sandia report entitled "A Performance Evaluation of Biometric Identification Devices" (SAND91-0276 UC-906 Unlimited Release, Printed June 1991), and on its experience with the current photo-identification system, the licensee concludes that the proposed hand geometry system will provide the same high assurance objective regarding onsite physical protection that is achieved by the current system. Since both the badge and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected area, the proposed system would provide for a positive verification process. Potential loss of a badge by an individual, as a result of taking the badge offsite, would not enable an unauthorized entry into protected areas. The licensee will implement a process for testing the proposed system to ensure a continued overall level of performance equivalent to that specified in the regulation. The Physical Security Plans for both sites will be revised to include implementation and testing of the hand geometry access control system and to allow licensee employees and contractors to take their badges offsite.

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 area.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely

within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request. Such action would not change any current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2," dated August 1986.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 12, 1995, the staff consulted with the Texas State official, Arthur C. Tate of the Bureau of Radiation Control, Texas Department of Health, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Findings of No Significant Impact

Based on the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated March 27, 1995, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Wharton County Junior College, J.M. Hodges Learning Center, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 31st day of May 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Thomas W. Alexion,

Project Manager, Project Directorate IV-1, Division of Reactor Projects III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 95-13978 Filed 6-6-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

[Docket No. 50-443]

North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation, Seabrook Station, Unit No. 1; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from Facility Operating License No. NPF-86, issued to North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (the licensee or North Atlantic), for operation of the Seabrook Station, Unit No. 1 (Seabrook) located in Rockingham County, New Hampshire.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to North Atlantic's request for exemption dated October 17, 1994, as supplemented by letters dated February 13, 1995, April 26, 1995, and May 12, 1995. The proposed action would exempt North Atlantic from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55. The proposed action would allow North Atlantic to eliminate issuing and retrieving photograph identification badges at the entrance and exit location to the Seabrook protected area upon implementation of a biometric (hand geometry) system of site access control. North Atlantic would be authorized to permit all individuals with unescorted access, including North Atlantic employees, contractor personnel, NRC employees, and others to retain their badges when leaving the Seabrook protected area.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The requirements for the establishment and maintenance of a physical protection system against theft of special nuclear material and against radiological sabotage at certain sites where special nuclear material is used are prescribed in 10 CFR Part 73. Facilities licensed under 10 CFR Part 50 are included in the scope of 10 CFR Part 73. Paragraph 73.55(a) specifies the general performance objectives and requirements of an onsite physical protection system and security organization, and paragraphs 73.55(b) through 73.55(h) specify minimum

specific requirements for the onsite physical protection system and security organization. Access requirements are specified in 73.55(d). Paragraph 73.55(d)(1) requires that licensees control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area, and 73.55(d)(5) requires a numbered picture badge identification system to be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escort. Paragraph 73.55(d)(5) also states that an individual not employed by the licensee 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 of Seabrook is controlled through the use of a numbered picture badge and an attached but separate keycard (containing encoded information to relate the keycard to the badged individual) which is used to actuate the entrance turnstile for access into the protected area and certain other specific areas authorized within the protected area. The badges and keycards for all individuals who have been granted unescorted access, including North Atlantic employees, contractor personnel, NRC employees, and others, are stored by security personnel at the entrance to the protected area whenever they are not being used by the authorized individuals. Security personnel stationed at the entrance to the protected area use the photograph on the badge to visually verify the identity of an individual requesting access. After verification, the badge and keycard are issued to the individual to allow entrance to the protected area. The badge and keycard are retrieved when the individual is exiting the protected area. In accordance with the Seabrook Physical Security Plan and Safeguards Contingency Plan, no individual is allowed to retain a badge and keycard when leaving the protected area.

North Atlantic proposes to implement an alternative unescorted access control system which would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges and keycards at the protected area entrance/exit location and, instead, would allow all individuals with unescorted access to retain their badges and keycards when leaving the protected area.

An exemption from 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) is required to permit individuals who are not North Atlantic employees to take their numbered picture badges from the protected area.

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action.

Under the proposed system, each individual who is authorized for unescorted entry into the protected area would have the physical characteristics of their hand (hand geometry) registered with their badge number and keycard in the access control system. When an individual inserts the keycard 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 extracted hand image would be compared with the previously stored template associated with that badge and keycard to verify authorization for entry. All individuals authorized for unescorted access would be allowed to retain their badge and keycard when leaving the protected area.

Based on Sandia Laboratory report, SAND91-0276 UC-906, A *Performance Evaluation of Biometric Identification Devices*, (Unlimited Release, Printed June 1991), and on North Atlantic's experience with the current photo-identification system, North Atlantic demonstrated that the proposed hand geometry system would provide enhanced site access control. Since the badge, keycard, and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected area, the proposed system would provide for a positive verification process. Loss of either a picture badge, keycard or both badge and keycard outside the protected area would not enable an unauthorized entry into the protected area. North Atlantic will implement a process for testing the proposed system to ensure continued overall level of performance equivalent to that specified in the regulation. The Physical Security Plan and Safeguards Contingency Plan for Seabrook will be revised to include implementation and testing of the hand geometry access control system and to allow badges and keycards to be taken from the protected area.

The access 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, and picture badges will continue to be displayed by all individuals while inside the protected area.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed exemption and concludes that there will be no changes to Seabrook or the environment as a result of this action. The proposed exemption does not in any way affect the manner by which the facility is

operated or change the facility itself. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that the proposed action would result in no radiological or nonradiological environmental impact.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request. Such action would not change any current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Seabrook Station, Unit No. 1.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 17, 1995 the NRC staff consulted with the Massachusetts State official, Mr. James Muckerheid of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. On May 18, 1995 the NRC staff consulted with the New Hampshire State official, Mr. George Iverson of the New Hampshire Emergency Management Agency. The State officials had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

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

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see North Atlantic's letters dated October 17, 1994, February 13, 1995, April 26, 1995, and May 12, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Exeter Public Library, Founders Park, Exeter, NH 03833.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 31st day of May 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Phillip F. McKee,

Director, Project Directorate I-3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 95-13977 Filed 6-6-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

[Docket Nos. 50-275 and 50-323]:

**Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant,
Unit Nos. 1 and 2; Environmental
Assessment and Finding of No
Significant Impact**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-80 and DPR-82, issued to Pacific Gas and Electric Company (the licensee), for operation of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2, located in San Luis Obispo County, California.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would allow the storage of fuel in new and spent fuel racks with enrichments up to and including 5.0 weight percent U-235, would clarify that substitution of fuel rods with filler rods is acceptable for fuel designs that have been analyzed with applicable NRC-approved codes and methods, and would allow the use of ZIRLO fuel cladding in the future in addition to Zircaloy-4. The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated February 6, 1995, as supplemented by letters dated March 23, and May 22, 1995.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action is needed so that the licensee can use higher fuel enrichment to provide the flexibility of extending the fuel irradiation and to permit future operation with longer fuel cycles.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed revisions to the technical specifications. The proposed revisions would permit storage of fuel enriched to a nominal 5.0 weight percent Uranium 235. The safety considerations associated with storing new and spent fuel of a higher enrichment have been evaluated by the NRC staff. The staff has concluded that such changes would not adversely affect plant safety. The proposed changes have no adverse effect on the probability of

any accident. No changes are being made in the types or amounts of any radiological effluents that may be released offsite. There is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.

The environmental impacts of transportation resulting from the use of higher enrichment fuel and extended irradiation (an enveloping case for the Diablo Canyon Power Plant since burnup remains unchanged) were published and discussed in the staff assessment entitled, "NRC Assessment of the Environmental Effects of Transportation Resulting from Extended Fuel Enrichment and Irradiation," dated July 7, 1988, and published in the **Federal Register** (53 FR 30355) on August 11, 1988, as corrected on August 24, 1988 (53 FR 32322) in connection with Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant Unit 1: Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact. As indicated therein, the environmental cost contribution of the proposed increase in the fuel enrichment and irradiation limits are either unchanged or may, in fact, be reduced from those summarized in Table S-4 as set forth in 10 CFR 51.52(c). Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environment impacts associated with the proposed amendment.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts of reactor operation with higher enrichment, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. 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 does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental

Statement for Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 22, 1995, the staff consulted with the California State official, Mr. Steve Hsu of the Department of Health Services, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

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

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated February 6, 1995, as supplemented by letters dated March 23, and May 22, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the California Polytechnic State University, Robert E. Kennedy Library, Government Documents and Maps Department, San Luis Obispo, California 93407.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 1st day of June 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William H. Bateman,

Director, Project Directorate IV-2, Division of Reactor Projects III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 95-13976 Filed 6-6-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

[Docket Nos. 50-277 and 50-278]

**PECO Energy Company; Notice of
Consideration of Issuance of
Amendment to Facility Operating
License and Opportunity for a Hearing**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-44 and DPR-56 issued to PECO Energy Company (the licensee) for operation of the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Units 2 and 3, located at York County, Pennsylvania.

The proposed amendment would revise the technical specification (TS) limiting condition for operation (LCO) for the Peach Bottom emergency diesel generators (EDGs). The LCOs will be revised to allow a single EDG to be out of service for a period of 30 days