to their FSAR within 6 months after each refueling outage provided that the interval between successive updates does not exceed 24 months. Since SSES Units 1 and 2 share a common FSAR, the licensee must update the same document within 6 months after a refueling outage for either unit. The proposed action would maintain the SSES FSAR current within 24 months of the last revision and would not exceed the 24-month interval for submission of the 10 CFR 50.59 design change report for either unit.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that 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 does involve 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 the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, dated June 1981.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 24, 1997, the staff consulted with the Pennsylvania State official, Mr. David Ney of the Bureau of Radiation Protection, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, 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 proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated September 6, 1996, 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 Osterhout Free Library, Reference Department, 71 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 2nd day of May 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John F. Stolz,

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

[FR Doc. 97–11832 Filed 5–6–97; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–440]

The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, Et Al., Perry Nuclear Power Plant, Unit No. 1, Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering approval, by issuance of an order under 10 CFR 50.80, of the indirect transfer of Facility Operating License No. NPF–58, issued to The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, *et al.*, the licensees, for operation of the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, Unit No. 1, located in Lake County, Ohio.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would consent to the indirect transfer of the license with respect to a proposed merger between Centerior Energy Corporation (the parent corporation for The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, Toledo Edison Company, and Centerior Service Company; licensees for Perry Nuclear Power Plant, Unit No. 1) and Ohio Edison Company (Perry licensee). Ohio Edison Company is also the parent company for OES Nuclear, Inc., and Pennsylvania Power Company, which are also licensees for Perry. The merger would result in the formation of a new single holding company, First Energy Corp.

The proposed action is in accordance with The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company's request for approval dated December 13, 1996. Supplemental information was submitted by letter dated February 14, 1997.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action is required to obtain the necessary consent to the indirect transfer of the license discussed above. According to the licensee, the underlying transaction is needed to create a stronger, more competitive enterprise that is expected to save over $1 billion over the first 10 years of FirstEnergy operation.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has reviewed the proposed action and concludes that there will be no changes to the facility or its operation as a result of the proposed action. Accordingly, the NRC staff concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the NRC staff concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives 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 does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2, documented in NUREG–0884.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on April 10, 1997, the staff consulted with the Ohio State official, C. O'Clare of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, 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 Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company submittal dated December 13, 1996, supplemented by letter dated February 14, 1997, 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 Perry Public Library, 3753 Main Street, Perry, Ohio 44081.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 30th day of April 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Jon B. Hopkins, Sr.

Project Manager, Project Directorate III–3, Division of Reactor Projects III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 97–11855 Filed 5–6–97; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–302]

Florida Power Corporation; 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 No. DPR–72 issued to Florida Power Corporation, (the licensee), for operation of the Crystal River Unit 3 Nuclear Generating Plant (CR3) located in Citrus County, Florida.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated June 22, as supplemented November 22, 1995 and January 31, 1996 for exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55, ''Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power plant reactors against radiological sabotage.'' The exemption would allow implementation of a hand geometry biometric system to the site access control such that photograph identification badges can be taken offsite.

The Need for the Proposed Action

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, paragraph (a), the licensee shall establish and maintain an onsite physical protection system and security organization.

10 CFR 73.55(d), ''Access Requirements,'' paragraph (1), specifies that ''licensee shall control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area.'' 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.'' 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 of CR3 is controlled through the use of a photograph on a badge and a separate keycard (hereafter, these are referred to as ''badge''). The security officers at each entrance station use the photograph on the badge to visually identify the individual requesting access. The badges for both licensee employees and contract personnel who have been granted unescorted access are issued upon entrance at each entrance/exit location and are returned upon exit. The badges are stored and are retrievable at each entrance/exit location. In accordance with 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5), contractors are not allowed to take badges offsite. In accordance with the plant's physical security plans, neither licensee employees nor contractors are allowed to take badges offsite.

The licensee proposes to implement an alternative unescorted access control system which would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges at each entrance/exit location and would allow all individuals with unescorted access to keep their badges with them 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 the licensee's application. Under the proposed system, each individual who is authorized for unescorted entry into protected areas 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 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 demonstrated that the proposed hand geometry system would provide enhanced site access control. Since both the badge and hand geometry would be necessary for access into the protected area, 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 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 the facility 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 areas.

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