NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Sunshine Act Meeting

TIME: 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 17, 1997.

PLACE: The Board Room, 5th Floor, 490 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20594.

STATUS: Open.

MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED:

6664B Railroad Accident Report: Collision and Derailment of Maryland Rail Commuter Train 286 and National Railroad Passenger Corporation Train 29, Near Silver Spring, Maryland, February 16, 1996.

6785A Aviation Accident Report: Descent Below Visual Glidepath and Collision With Terrain, Delta Air Lines Flight 554, McDonnell Douglas MD–88, N914DL, LaGuardia Airport, New York, October 19, 1996.

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT: Telephone: (202) 314–6100.

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Dated: June 6, 1997.

Bea Hardesty,

Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. STN 50–455 AND STN 50–457]

Commonwealth Edison Company; Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity For a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF–66 and NPF–77, issued to Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd, the licensee), for operation of Byron Station, Unit 2, located in Ogle County, Illinois and Braidwood Station, Unit 2, located in Will County, Illinois.

The proposed amendments would revise the technical specifications (TS) and associated bases for TS 4.5.2.b.1 related to the requirement to vent the emergency core cooling system (ECCS) pump casing and high points outside containment. The proposed changes will revise the venting requirement to encompass the non-operating ECCS pumps and discharge piping which are provided with high point vent valves. Additionally, the wording of the surveillance will be revised to clearly indicate that the installed high point vent valves and pump casing vent valves will be utilized to accomplish the venting operation. A new requirement will be added to ultrasonically examine the discharge piping of the idle centrifugal pump and the portion of the piping upstream of the high head safety injection isolation valves adjacent to the vent valve every 31 days.

On May 22, 1997, during review of a Byron surveillance procedure for implementing TS 4.5.2.b.1 requirements for venting the ECCS, the staff identified that the licensee was not in literal compliance with the TS requirements for venting the centrifugal charging (CV) pumps (an ECCS subsystem) and discharge piping. The TS require the ECCS pumps and discharge piping to be vented every 31 days. Prior to questions raised by the staff, ComEd considered themselves to be in compliance with the TS by crediting the dynamic venting action of the operating CV pump as meeting the requirement to ensure that the ECCS piping is full of water. For the piping not directly in the flowpath, gas accumulation was judged not to be credible due to the pressure inside the piping. The idle CV pump was considered to be self-venting due to the system design and piping configuration. During the May 22, 1997, discussions, ComEd was informed that with regard to the high points in the CV pump discharge lines, discharge piping downstream of the standby CV pump and the piping upstream of the high head safety injection valves, that includes the high point vent valve are not subject to system flow and are, therefore, not flushed or vented. Although ComEd considered all CV pumps to be operable, it concluded that the plants were not in literal compliance with the TS and both trains of CV were declared inoperable at 7:00 p.m. CDT. The licensee subsequently requested a Notice of Enforcement Discretion (NOED) to continue operation. A NOED was granted on May 23, 1997. Subsequent to issuance of the NOED, on May 24, 1997, the licensee submitted, in accordance with NRC procedures, a request for exigent license amendments to bring the plant operating configuration and the TS into conformance.

The May 24, 1997, application was supplemented on May 31, 1997, by requesting an emergency license amendment for Byron, Unit 1, only. Amendment No. 90 was issued for Byron, Unit 1, on June 1, 1997.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendments, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6) for amendments to be granted under exigent circumstances, the NRC staff must determine that the amendments requested involve no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendments would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

1. The proposed change does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The changes proposed in this request will align the surveillance requirements with the installed system design and normal operating conditions. No increase in the probability of an accident will occur as a result of this change. The conduct of surveillances required by the Technical Specifications are not postulated to result in accident initiation. The level of surveillance performed to date has provided confidence that the objective of the current surveillance requirement has been met. Ultrasonic examinations of CV piping which had not been manually vented show that the affected piping is water solid. The design of the pumps and installed piping configuration are such that the standby pump is maintained under a positive pressure. Evaluations previously performed in support of Amendment 36 confirmed that hydrogen introduced into the VCT [volume control tank] will not come out of solution in the CV pump suction line. Experience with performing the manual venting for all ECCS subsystems to date has not resulted in the identification of significant voiding. This was verified by a search of the station's Problem Identification database. The applicable surveillance procedure for performing the venting requires that a Problem Identification Form be generated if significant voiding is experienced. No such problems have been identified. As such, the proposed change does not result in a significant increase in the probability of occurrence of a previously analyzed accident.

The consequences of a previously analyzed accident are not increased. Operating experience has shown that the level of surveillance performed to date is sufficient to provide confidence that no significant voiding has occurred in the affected piping. Ultrasonic examinations have confirmed the water solid condition of the piping. Even though voiding is not expected, evaluation of postulated voided conditions confirm that