

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

Regarding the fabrication exemption, the Environmental Assessment for the final rule, "Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel in NRC-Approved Storage Casks at Nuclear Power Reactor Sites" (55 FR 29181 (1990)), considered the potential environmental impacts of overpacks which are used to store spent nuclear fuel under a CoC and concluded that there would be no significant environmental impacts. The proposed action now under consideration would not permit use of the overpacks, but would only permit fabrication. There are no radiological environmental impacts from fabrication since overpack fabrication does not involve radioactive materials. The major non-radiological environmental impacts involve use of natural resources due to overpack fabrication. Each HI-STORM 100 overpack weighs approximately 100 tons and is constructed of metal and concrete. The HI-TRAC 100 transfer cask weighs approximately 125 tons and is made of structural steel and lead. The amount of materials required to fabricate these components is expected to have very little impact on the associated industry. Fabrication of the metal components would be at a metal fabrication facility, while fabrication of the concrete overpacks would be partially fabricated at the same metal fabrication facility, with only the concrete pours being done at Dresden. The metal and concrete used in the fabrication of these components is insignificant compared to the amount of metal and concrete fabrication performed annually in the United States. If the components are not usable, the components could be disposed of or recycled. The amount of metal and concrete disposed of is insignificant compared to the amount of metal and concrete that is disposed of annually in the United States. Based upon this information, the fabrication of these components will have no significant impact on the environment since no radioactive materials are involved, and the amount of natural resources used is minimal.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

Since there is no significant environmental impact associated with the proposed actions, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact are not evaluated. The alternative to the proposed actions would be to deny approval of the exemption and, therefore, not allow fabrication until a CoC is issued. This

alternative would have the same environmental impact.

Given that there are no significant differences in environmental impact between the proposed action and the alternative considered and that the applicant has a legitimate need to fabricate the components prior to certification and is willing to assume the risk that any fabricated components may not be approved or may require modification, the Commission concludes that the preferred alternative is to grant the exemption from the prohibition on fabrication prior to receipt of a CoC.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

Mr. F. Niziolek, Reactor Safety Section Head, Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety, was contacted about the Environmental Assessment for the proposed action and had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The environmental impacts of the proposed action have been reviewed in accordance with the requirements set forth in 10 CFR Part 51. Based upon the foregoing Environmental Assessment, the Commission finds that the proposed action of granting an exemption from 10 CFR 72.234(c) so that Holtec may fabricate four HI-STORM 100 overpacks and one HI-TRAC-100 transfer cask prior to issuance of a CoC will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

The request for the exemption from 10 CFR 72.234(c) was filed on November 15, 1999. For further details with respect to this action, see the application for CoC for the HI-STORM 100 cask system, dated October 26, 1995. On July 30, 1999, a preliminary Safety Evaluation Report and a proposed CoC for the HI-STORM 100 cask system were issued by the NRC staff to initiate the rulemaking process. The exemption request and CoC application are docketed under 10 CFR Part 72, Docket 72-1014. These documents are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of January 2000. P=02'≤

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

E. William Brach,

Director Spent Fuel Project, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Experts' Meeting on High-Burnup Fuel Behavior Under Postulated Accident Conditions

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of Meeting.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a meeting to develop Phenomena Identification and Ranking Tables (PIRTs). PIRTs have been used at NRC since 1988, and they provide a structured way to obtain a technical understanding that is needed to address certain issues. About twenty of the world's best technical experts are participating in this activity, and the experts represent a balance between industry, universities, foreign researchers, and regulatory organizations. The current PIRT activity is addressing a postulated BWR accident wherein power oscillations occur, the reactor fails to scram, and the oscillations then reach sufficient magnitude that fuel failure may occur before the emergency operating procedures are able to terminate the oscillations and shut the reactor down.

DATES: February 8-10, 2000, 8:30 am-5:30 pm.

ADDRESSES: Room T10A1 (TWFN) of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Ralph Meyer, SMSAB, Division of Systems Analysis and Regulatory Effectiveness, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-6789.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting agenda will be posted on the NRC Web site at www.nrc.gov/RES/meetings.html by February 1, 2000. The meeting is open to the public. Attendees will need to obtain a visitor badge at the TWFN building lobby.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of January 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Charles E. Rossi,

Director, Division of Systems Analysis and Regulatory Effectiveness, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Nuclear Regulatory Commission. P='02'≤