

### Supplement to the Programmatic EIS on SSM for a Modern Pit Facility Schedule

The proposed Supplement to the Programmatic EIS on SSM for a Modern Pit Facility schedule is as follows:

*Notice of Intent:* September 2002.

*Public Scoping Meetings:* October 2002.

*Publish Draft EIS:* May 2003.

*Draft EIS Public Hearings:* June–July 2003.

*Publish Final EIS:* March 2004.

*Record of Decision:* April 2004.

### Public Scoping Process

To assist in defining the appropriate scope of the Supplement to the Programmatic EIS on SSM for a Modern Pit Facility and to identify significant environmental issues to be addressed, NNSA representatives will conduct public scoping meetings at the dates, times, and locations described above under **DATES**. At these meetings, the NNSA will present a short summary of the project, indicate the alternatives to be considered, and present the proposed scope of the Supplement to the Programmatic EIS on SSM for a Modern Pit Facility. Following the initial presentation at each site, NNSA representatives will answer questions and accept comments, and the public will have a chance to offer their comments on the proposal, alternatives to be studied and the scope of the Supplement to the Programmatic EIS on SSM for a Modern Pit Facility. Copies of handouts from the meetings will be available to those unable to attend, by contacting the NNSA as described above under **ADDRESSES**.

Issued in Washington, DC, this 16th day of September 2002.

**Spencer Abraham,**

*Secretary of Energy.*

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–237, 50–249, 50–254, and 50–265]

### Exelon Generation Company, LLC; Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Units 2 and 3, Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) for Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–19

and DPR–25, issued to Exelon Generation Company, LLC (the licensee), for operation of the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Units 2 and 3, located in Grundy County, Illinois, and for Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–29 and DPR–30, issued to the licensee, for operation of the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Rock Island County, Illinois. Therefore, as required by 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

### Environmental Assessment

#### Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would grant a schedular extension for Dresden Nuclear Power Station (Dresden), Units 2 and 3, and for Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station (Quad Cities), Units 1 and 2, for submittal of revised Updated Final Safety Analysis Reports (UFSARs) from the regularly scheduled dates. 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) requires that subsequent revisions to the UFSAR be submitted periodically to the NRC provided that the interval between successive updates does not exceed 24 months. The Dresden and Quad Cities UFSAR revisions are currently submitted on a 24-month cycle. The next scheduled date for submittal of the revised UFSAR for Dresden is June 30, 2003, and for Quad Cities is October 20, 2003. However, the licensee plans to submit revised UFSARs along with Operating License Renewal Applications (LRAs) for Dresden and Quad Cities in January 2003. The licensee plans to resume the established schedule for submittal of the UFSAR revisions in 2005 for both stations. The licensee requests a one-time exemption to postpone submittal of the revised Dresden and Quad Cities UFSARs until 2005.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated August 9, 2002.

#### The Need for the Proposed Action

The licensee proposes to submit revised UFSARs with LRAs in January 2003, and to resume the established schedule for submittal of UFSAR revisions for Dresden on June 30, 2005, and for Quad Cities on October 20, 2005. An exemption is required because 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) requires that subsequent revisions to the UFSAR be submitted periodically to the NRC provided that the interval between successive updates does not exceed 24 months.

### Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there are no significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

### Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (*i.e.*, the “no-action” alternative). 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

The action does not involve the use of any different resource than those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Units 2 and 3, dated November 1973, and for the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2, dated September 1972.

### Agencies and Persons Consulted

On August 22, 2002, the staff consulted with the Illinois State official, Mr. F. Niziolek of the Department of Nuclear Safety, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

### Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the

NRC 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 August 9, 2002. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, should contact the NRC PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to [pdr@nrc.gov](mailto:pdr@nrc.gov).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of September, 2002.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Anthony J. Mendiola,**

*Chief, Section 2, Project Directorate III,  
Division of Licensing Project Management,  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-327 and 50-328]

### Tennessee Valley Authority, Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating Licenses DPR-77 and DPR-79 issued to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA or the licensee) for operation of the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant (SQN), Units 1 and 2, located in Hamilton County, Tennessee. Therefore, as required by Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR), Section 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

#### Environmental Assessment

##### *Identification of the Proposed Action*

The proposed action would change SQN's Technical Specifications to allow TVA to irradiate up to 2256 tritium-producing burnable absorber rods (TPBARs) in each of SQN's two reactor cores. Irradiating the TPBARs in the reactor cores supports the U.S.

Department of Energy (DOE) in maintaining the nation's tritium inventory. TVA will insert the TPBARs into positions in the reactor cores where conventional burnable poison rods would normally be located (conventional poison rods contain boron which reacts with neutrons making them unavailable for interacting with uranium atoms, thereby slowing fission and heat generation). TPBARs are not reactor fuel and do not generate thermal energy for generating electrical energy.

TPBARs use lithium rather than boron. Neutron irradiation in the reactor core converts the lithium in the TPBARs into tritium. After one operating cycle, TVA would remove the fuel assemblies containing TPBARs from the SQN cores and put them into the spent fuel pool. TVA would then, after several weeks (based on plant schedules rather than decay considerations), remove the irradiated TPBARs from the fuel assemblies and consolidate them into shipping casks for DOE to transport them to its tritium extraction facility at its Savannah River Site.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated September 21, 2001, as supplemented by letters of June 11, July 19, August 9, August 30, September 5, and September 12, 2002.

##### *The Need for the Proposed Action*

The proposed action would allow SQN to provide irradiation services for DOE to maintain the nation's tritium supply as prescribed by Public Law (PL) 106-65. Section 3134 of PL 106-65 directs the Secretary of Energy to produce new tritium at TVA's Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN) or the SQN plant.

##### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

DOE's Environmental Impact Statement, DOE/EIS-0288, Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Production of Tritium in a Commercial Light Water Reactor, dated March 1999, assessed the environmental impacts of producing tritium at WBN and SQN. TVA was a cooperating Federal agency in preparing this EIS and adopted the EIS in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.3(c) of the Council on Environmental Quality regulations. DOE also prepared a Tritium Production Core (TPC) Topical Report, NDP-98-181, Rev. 1, to address the safety and licensing issues associated with incorporating TPBARs in a reference pressurized-water reactor. The NRC used its Standard Review Plan (NUREG-0800) as the basis for evaluating the impact of the TPBARs on a reference plant. The NRC reviewed the

TPC Topical Report and issued a Safety Evaluation Report, NUREG-1672, in May 1999. NUREG-1672 identified 17 plant-specific interface issues that a licensee would be required to address in support of a plant specific amendment to operate a tritium production core. TVA's application of September 21, 2001, and supplements, addressed these interface issues. The NRC staff is reviewing TVA's amendment request and will issue a safety evaluation documenting its review.

#### 1. Radiological Impact From Tritium Release to the Reactor Coolant System (RCS) Under Normal Plant Operations With 2256 TPBARs in each Core

Tritium levels in the RCSs of large pressurized-water reactors have ranged as high as 4000 curies per year (Ci/yr) without exceeding regulatory limits. TVA estimated, as discussed in its June 11, 2002, letter, that the tritium level in the RCS of each SQN unit would be about 3126 Ci/yr with 2256 TPBARs in each unit's reactor. This increased tritium level could increase overall occupational exposure, but NRC data summarized in NUREG-0713, "Occupational Radiation Exposure at Commercial Nuclear Power Reactors and Other Facilities," dated 1995, indicate tritium exposure is not an important contributor to overall occupational exposure.

TVA, in its letter dated June 11, 2002, stated that it does not expect the increased RCS activity at SQN to greatly affect normal RCS feed-and-bleed operation throughout the cycle. The NRC staff finds no reason to disagree with TVA's conclusion. Thus, primary coolant discharge volumes should be similar to current volumes.

The staff concludes that the additional dose rate from operating SQN with 2256 TPBARs in each reactor will not have a significant impact on TVA's ability to control worker radiation doses and keep them well within regulatory limits using the controls and practices in SQN's existing Radiation Protection Program.

If increased RCS feed and bleed is required, it may be necessary to temporarily store the increased volume of tritiated liquid onsite, or to dilute the tritiated liquid to ensure that 10 CFR Part 20 discharge limits are met. SQN has sufficient storage tanks to accommodate this additional liquid waste.