

for unrestricted use. The University of Minnesota has conducted surveys of the facilities and provided information to the NRC to demonstrate that the site meets the license criteria in Subpart E of 10 CFR Part 20 for unrestricted release.

The staff has prepared an EA in support of the proposed licensing action. The staff examined the University of Minnesota's request and the information that the licensee has provided in support of its request, including the surveys performed by University of Minnesota to demonstrate compliance with 10 CFR 20.1402, "Radiological Criteria for Unrestricted Use," to ensure that the NRC's decision is protective of the public health and safety and the environment. Based on its review, the staff has determined that the affected environment and the environmental impacts associated with the unrestricted use of the University of Minnesota's facilities are bounded by the impacts evaluated by the "Generic Environmental Impact Statement in Support of Rulemaking on Radiological Criteria for License Termination of NRC-Licensed Nuclear Facilities" (NUREG-1496). Additionally, no non-radiological impacts were identified.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the EA, summarized above, the staff has concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed action. Accordingly, the staff has determined that a FONSI is appropriate, and has determined that the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not warranted.

IV. Further Information

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," University of Minnesota's request, the EA summarized above, and the documents related to this proposed action are available electronically for public inspection and copying from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. These documents include University of Minnesota's letter dated September 11, 2003, with enclosures (Accession No. ML033230183); and the EA summarized above (Accession No. ML033280741).

Dated at Lisle, Illinois, this 2nd day of December 2003.

Christopher G. Miller,

Chief, Decommissioning Branch, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, RIII.

[FR Doc. 03-30858 Filed 12-12-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Draft Criteria for Determining Feasibility of Manual Actions To Achieve Post-Fire Safe Shutdown

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Extension of opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering a revision to the fire protection regulations in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, Paragraph III.G.2 to allow the use of manual actions by nuclear power plant operators to achieve hot shutdown conditions in the event of fires in certain areas provided the actions are evaluated against specific criteria and determined to be acceptable. For complying with the requirements of Appendix R, Paragraph III.G.2, licensees who rely on operator manual actions which have not been reviewed and approved by the NRC are generally considered to be in non-compliance. However, the NRC believes that manual actions relied upon by licensees are safe and effective if they meet appropriate acceptance criteria. Accordingly, until the fire protection regulations are revised, the NRC is planning to issue an interim enforcement policy to exercise enforcement discretion for non-compliant licensees if their manual actions meet the NRC's interim acceptance criteria. The NRC is seeking public comments on the adequacy and clarity of draft interim acceptance criteria. On November 26, 2003 (68 FR 66501), the NRC published its draft interim acceptance criteria in the **Federal Register**. The 30 day comment period established for these criteria was to have expired on December 26, 2003. In letters dated November 26 and December 2, 2003, the Nuclear Information and Resource Service and the Union of Concerned Scientists requested a 30 day extension to the comment period. The letters noted that the comment period included two major holidays and stated that the additional time was needed to research the issues and provide meaningful comments. Similar requests were made by many other members of the public. In view of

the importance of meaningful stakeholder input on these criteria, the NRC has decided to extend the comment period by 30 days.

DATES: The comment period has been extended and now expires on January 26, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T6-D59, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Comments may be submitted by e-mail to nrcprep@nrc.gov. Comments may be delivered to the NRC's headquarters at Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Richard Dudley, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-1116, e-mail rfd@nrc.gov or Ray Gallucci, telephone (301) 415-1255, e-mail rhg@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of December, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Catherine Haney,

Program Director, Policy and Rulemaking Program, Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 03-30859 Filed 12-12-03; 8:45 am]

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PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Required Interest Rate Assumption for Determining Variable-Rate Premium; Interest Assumptions for Multiemployer Plan Valuations Following Mass Withdrawal

AGENCY: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

ACTION: Notice of interest rates and assumptions.

SUMMARY: This notice informs the public of the interest rates and assumptions to be used under certain Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation regulations. These rates and assumptions are published elsewhere (or can be derived from rates published elsewhere), but are collected and published in this notice for the convenience of the public. Interest rates are also published on the PBGC's Web site (<http://www.pbgc.gov>).

DATES: The required interest rate for determining the variable-rate premium under part 4006 applies to premium payment years beginning in December 2003. The interest assumptions for

performing multiemployer plan valuations following mass withdrawal under part 4281 apply to valuation dates occurring in January 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Harold J. Ashner, Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, 202-326-4024. (TTY/TDD users may call the Federal relay service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to 202-326-4024.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Variable-Rate Premiums

Section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii)(II) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and § 4006.4(b)(1) of the PBGC's regulation on Premium Rates (29 CFR part 4006) prescribe use of an assumed interest rate (the "required interest rate") in determining a single-employer plan's variable-rate premium. The required interest rate is the "applicable percentage" (currently 100 percent) of the annual yield on 30-year Treasury securities for the month preceding the beginning of the plan year for which premiums are being paid (the "premium payment year"). (Although the Treasury Department has ceased issuing 30-year securities, the Internal Revenue Service announces a surrogate yield figure each month—based on the 30-year Treasury bond maturing in February 2031—which the PBGC uses to determine the required interest rate.)

The required interest rate to be used in determining variable-rate premiums for premium payment years beginning in December 2003 is 5.12 percent.

The following table lists the required interest rates to be used in determining variable-rate premiums for premium payment years beginning between January 2003 and December 2003.

| For premium payment years beginning in: | The required interest rate is: |
|---|--------------------------------|
| January 2003 | 4.92 |
| February 2003 | 4.94 |
| March 2003 | 4.81 |
| April 2003 | 4.80 |
| May 2003 | 4.90 |
| June 2003 | 4.53 |
| July 2003 | 4.37 |
| August 2003 | 4.93 |
| September 2003 | 5.31 |
| October 2003 | 5.14 |
| November 2003 | 5.16 |
| December 2003 | 5.12 |

Multiemployer Plan Valuations Following Mass Withdrawal

The PBGC's regulation on Duties of Plan Sponsor Following Mass Withdrawal (29 CFR part 4281)

prescribes the use of interest assumptions under the PBGC's regulation on Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans (29 CFR part 4044). The interest assumptions applicable to valuation dates in January 2004 under part 4044 are contained in an amendment to part 4044 published elsewhere in today's **Federal Register**. Tables showing the assumptions applicable to prior periods are codified in appendix B to 29 CFR part 4044.

Issued in Washington, DC, on this 10th day of December, 2003.

Joseph H. Grant,

Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

[FR Doc. 03-30948 Filed 12-12-03; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-48882; File No. S7-24-89]

Joint Industry Plan; Order Extending for One Year the Operation of the Reporting Plan for Nasdaq-Listed Securities Traded on Exchanges on an Unlisted Trading Privilege Basis, Submitted by the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc., the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc., the Chicago Stock Exchange, Inc., the Cincinnati Stock Exchange, Inc., the Pacific Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange LLC, and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, Inc.

December 4, 2003.

I. Introduction and Description

On August 8, 2003, the Cincinnati Stock Exchange, Inc. ("CSE") on behalf of itself and the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. ("NASD"), the American Stock Exchange LLC ("Amex"), the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. ("BSE"), the Chicago Stock Exchange, Inc. ("CHX"), the Pacific Exchange, Inc. ("PCX"), and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, Inc. ("PHLX") (hereinafter referred to collectively as "Participants"),¹ as members of the operating committee ("Operating Committee" or "Committee") of the Plan submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") a request to extend the operation of the

Plan and also to extend certain exemptive relief as described below.² On August 12, 2003, the Commission issued a notice for comment and simultaneously granted summary effectiveness to the request to extend the operation of the Plan and certain exemptive relief.³ No comments were received in response to the publication of this notice.

The Nasdaq UTP Plan governs the collection, processing, and dissemination on a consolidated basis of quotation and last sale information for each of its Participants. This consolidated information informs investors of the current quotation and recent trade prices of Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. ("Nasdaq") securities. It enables investors to ascertain from one data source the current prices in all the markets trading Nasdaq securities. The Plan serves as the required transaction reporting plan for its Participants, which is a prerequisite for their trading Nasdaq securities. Currently, the Plan is scheduled to expire on December 16, 2003.

This order approves, pursuant to Rule 11Aa3-2(c)(2) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act"),⁴ the request to extend operation of the Plan and the request to extend certain exemptive relief ("Date Extension") for a one-year period⁵ expiring one year from the date of publication in the **Federal Register**.

II. Exemptive Relief

While both Nasdaq and the NASD operate under the umbrella of a single

² See letter from Jeffrey T. Brown, Chairman, Plan Operating Committee, to Jonathan G. Katz, Secretary, Commission, dated August 8, 2003.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 48318, 68 FR 49534 (August 18, 2003).

⁴ 17 CFR 240.11Aa3-2(c)(2).

⁵ As discussed in the order granting partial temporary approval of Amendment No. 13 to the Plan, see Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46729 (October 25, 2002), 67 FR 66685 (November 1, 2002) ("Partial Approval"), proposed amendments to the Plan had been segregated into four categories: (1) Category 1, "Effective Upon Nasdaq's Exchange Registration;" (2) Category 2, "Effective Upon Launch of the Internal SIP;" (3) Category 3, "Effective Upon End of Parallel Period—Elimination of the Legacy SIP;" and (4) Category 4, "Timing Not An Issue." Through the Partial Approval, the Commission approved the Category 2, 3, and 4 amendments on a pilot basis, but did not approve the Category 1 amendments. Therefore, the Plan the Commission extends today is the Plan, as modified, by all changes previously approved. In the Partial Approval, the Commission explicitly noted its intention to address the Category 1 amendments through separate action when the Commission acts on the Nasdaq exchange registration application. This order does not approve the Category 1 amendments and the Commission reiterates its intent to act upon the Category 1 amendments through separate action in conjunction with the Nasdaq exchange registration application.

¹ The CSE was elected chair of the Operating Committee for the Joint Self-Regulatory Organization Plan Governing the Collection, Consolidation and Dissemination of Quotation and Transaction Information for Nasdaq-Listed Securities Traded on Exchanges on an Unlisted Trading Privilege Basis ("Nasdaq UTP Plan" or "Plan") by the Participants.