

Place: Call will originate from the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia.

Type of Meeting: Closed.

Contact Person: Jennifer Richards, Committee Executive Secretary, National Science Board Office, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: (703) 292-7000. E-mail: jlrichar@nsf.gov.

Purpose of Meeting: To provide advice and recommendations in the selection of the NSB Public Service Award recipient.

Agenda: Discussion of candidates for the NSB Public Service Award as part of the selection process.

Reason for Meeting Closure: The candidate nominations being reviewed include information of a personal nature where public disclosure would constitute clearly unwarranted invasions of personal privacy. These matters are exempt from open meeting and public attendance under 5 U.S.C. 55b(c)(6).

Dated: November 10, 2008.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. E8-27132 Filed 11-13-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

NUREG/CR-XXXX, "Modeling a Digital Feedwater Control System Using Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods"; Draft Report for Comment

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability for public comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is conducting research to support development of regulatory guidance for using risk information related to digital systems in the licensing actions of nuclear power plants (NPPs). The objective of this research is to identify and develop methods, analytical tools, and regulatory guidance to support (1) using information on the risks of digital systems in NPP licensing decisions and (2) including models of digital systems into NPP probabilistic risk assessments (PRAs).

As part of this research, NRC is sponsoring a project on the use of traditional PRA methods to develop and quantitatively assess reliability models of digital systems. The initial tasks of this project, including preparatory work for developing reliability models of an example system, are addressed in NUREG/CR-6962, "Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods

for Digital Systems" (to be published shortly). The application of the selected traditional methods to the example system is documented in draft NUREG/CR-XXXX, "Modeling a Digital Feedwater Control System Using Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods." This notice announces the availability of the draft NUREG/CR for public comment.

DATES: Please submit comments on NUREG/CR-XXXX, "Modeling a Digital Feedwater Control System Using Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods," by December 29, 2008. Comments received after this date will be considered if practical to do so, but the NRC staff is able to ensure consideration only for those comments received on or before this date.

ADDRESSES: NUREG/CR-XXXX, "Modeling a Digital Feedwater Control System Using Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods," is available for inspection and copying for a fee at NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), Public File Area O-1F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available documents created or received at NRC after November 1, 1999, are available electronically at NRC's Electronic Reading Room at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html>. From this site, the public can gain entry into NRC's Agencywide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS), which provides text and image files of NRC's public documents. The ADAMS Accession Numbers for NUREG/CR-XXXX, "Modeling a Digital Feedwater Control System Using Traditional Probabilistic Risk Assessment Methods," are ML082800062 (main report) and ML082800063 (appendices). If you do not have access to ADAMS or have problems accessing the documents located in ADAMS, contact the NRC PDR Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, (301) 415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr@nrc.gov.

This document also will be posted on NRC's public Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/research/digital/tech-reference.html#one>.

Please submit comments to Chief, Rulemaking, Directives and Editing Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. You also may deliver comments to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Federal workdays, or by e-mail to: nrcprep@nrc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Alan Kuritzky, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-6255, e-mail: Alan.Kuritzky@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 6th day of November, 2008.

For the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Christiana Lui,

Director, Division of Risk Analysis, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

[FR Doc. E8-27100 Filed 11-13-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-366]

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.; Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant, Unit No. 2; Exemption

1.0 Background

The Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC, the licensee) is the holder of the Renewed Facility Operating License No. NPF-5 which authorizes operation of the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant, Unit No. 2 (HNP-2). The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

The facility consists of a boiling-water reactor located in Appling County in Georgia.

2.0 Request/Action

Pursuant to Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR), Section 50.12, "Specific Exemptions", SNC has, by letters dated March 21, May 2, August 8 and September 22, 2008, requested an exemption from the fuel cladding material requirements in 10 CFR 50.46, "Acceptance Criteria for Emergency Core Cooling Systems for Light-Water Nuclear Power Reactors," and Appendix K to 10 CFR part 50, "ECCS Evaluation Models," (Appendix K). The regulation in 10 CFR 50.46 contains acceptance criteria for emergency core cooling system (ECCS) for reactors fueled with zircaloy or ZIRLO™ cladding. In addition, Appendix K requires that the Baker-Just equation be used to predict the rates of energy release, hydrogen concentration, and cladding oxidation from the metal-water reaction. The exemption request relates solely to the specific types of cladding material specified in these regulations. As written, the regulations

presume the use of zircaloy or ZIRLO™ fuel rod cladding. Thus, an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.46, and Appendix K is needed to irradiate a lead test assembly (LTA) comprised of different cladding alloys at HNP-2.

3.0 Discussion

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, the Commission may, upon application by any interested person or upon its own initiative, grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, when (1) the exemptions are authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health or safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security; and (2) when special circumstances are present. Under Section 50.12(a)(2) of 10 CFR, special circumstances include, among other things, when application of the specific regulation in the particular circumstance would not serve, or is not necessary to achieve, the underlying purpose of the rule.

Authorized by Law

This exemption would allow the licensee to insert two lead test fuel assemblies with fuel rod cladding that does not meet the definition of Zircaloy or ZIRLO™ as specified by 10 CFR 50.46, and Appendix K, into the core of HNP-2, beginning with fuel cycle 21. As stated above, 10 CFR 50.12 allows the NRC to grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50. The NRC staff has determined that granting of the licensee's proposed exemption will not result in a violation of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, or the Commission's regulations. Therefore, the exemption is authorized by law.

No Undue Risk to Public Health and Safety

In regard to the fuel mechanical design, the exemption request relates solely to the specific types of cladding material specified in the regulations. The underlying purpose of 10 CFR 50.46 is to establish acceptance criteria for ECCS performance. In Section VI of its letter dated May 2, 2008, SNC provides a technical basis supporting the continued applicability of the 50.46 Paragraph (b) fuel criteria to GNF-Ziron. Quench tests under a restrained load have been conducted on GNF-Ziron samples oxidized to various levels at elevated loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) temperatures. While these tests differ from the post-steam oxidized ring-compression testing (which forms the basis of the 50.46 post-quench ductility criteria), these results provide reasonable assurance that the 17 percent

oxidation and 2200 degree Fahrenheit criteria are valid for GNF-Ziron and meet the underlying purpose of the rule, which is to maintain a degree of post-quench ductility in the fuel cladding material.

Based on an ongoing LOCA research program at Argonne National Laboratory, as discussed in NRC Research Information Letter 0801, "Technical Basis for Revision of Embrittlement Criteria in 10 CFR 50.46," ADAMS Accession No. ML081350225, cladding corrosion (and associated hydrogen pickup) has a significant impact on post-quench ductility. Post-irradiation examinations provided by the licensee demonstrate the favorable hydrogen pickup characteristics of GNF-Ziron as compared with standard zircaloy. Hence, the GNF-Ziron fuel rods would be less susceptible to the detrimental effects of hydrogen uptake during normal operation and their impact on post-quench ductility.

Paragraph I.A.5 of Appendix K to 10 CFR Part 50 states that the rates of energy, hydrogen concentration, and cladding oxidation from the metal-water reaction shall be calculated using the Baker-Just equation. Since the Baker-Just equation presumes the use of zircaloy clad fuel, strict application of the rule would not permit use of the equation for the LTA cladding for determining acceptable fuel performance. Metal-water reaction tests performed by GNF on GNF-Ziron demonstrate conservative reaction rates relative to the Baker-Just equation. Thus, application of Appendix K, Paragraph I.A.5 is not necessary for the licensee to achieve its underlying purpose in these circumstances.

High temperature perforation test results were provided. These test results illustrate similar burst characteristics of GNF-Ziron as compared with standard zircaloy. In addition, the licensee provides further comparisons of material properties between GNF-Ziron and zircaloy. Based upon this comparison of material properties, GNF and SNC believe that currently approved methods and models are directly applicable to GNF-Ziron. Based upon the material properties provided in SNC's letters dated May 2 and August 8, 2008, the NRC staff finds the use of current LOCA models and methods acceptable for the purpose of evaluating LTAs containing a limited number of GNF-Ziron fuel rods.

In support of their exemption request, SNC submitted, with its letter dated August 8, 2008, a GNF document entitled, "Impact of GNF-Ziron Cladding on Thermal-Mechanical

Licensing Limits". This report provides an assessment of the potential impact of differences in material properties on the GSTR-M fuel thermal-mechanical methodology. While not directly related to the 50.46 exemption request, the NRC staff finds the conclusion of this report acceptable for the purpose of evaluating LTAs containing a limited number of GNF-Ziron fuel rods. Further NRC staff review may be necessary prior to batch application of GNF-Ziron fuel cladding material.

Through mechanical testing and a comparison of material properties, SNC has provided reasonable assurance that anticipated in-reactor performance will be acceptable. Further, the licensee has demonstrated that the use of current methods and models are reasonable for evaluating the cladding's performance in response to anticipated operational occurrences and accidents. Nevertheless, as with any developmental cladding alloy, the NRC staff requires a limitation on the total number of fuel rods clad in a developmental alloy in order to ensure a minimal impact on the simulated progression and calculated consequences of postulated accidents. This limitation is directly related to the available material properties (both unirradiated and irradiated) used to judge the cladding alloy's anticipated in-reactor performance. Based on the material properties data presented within the application attachments, the NRC staff finds the HNP-2 LTA program acceptable with respect to achieving the underlying purpose of 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K to 10 CFR part 50.

Based upon results of metal-water reaction tests and mechanical testing which ensure the applicability of ECCS models and acceptance criteria, the limited number and anticipated performance of the advanced cladding fuel rods, and the use of approved LOCA models to ensure that the LTAs satisfy 10 CFR 50.46 acceptance criteria, the NRC staff finds it acceptable to grant an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K to 10 CFR part 50 for the use of two LTAs within HNP-2.

Consistent With Common Defense and Security

The proposed exemption would allow the licensee to insert two lead test fuel assemblies with fuel rod cladding that does not meet the definition of Zircaloy or ZIRLO™ as specified by 10 CFR 50.46, and Appendix K, into the core of HNP-2, beginning with fuel cycle 21. This change has no relation to security issues. Therefore, the common defense

and security is not impacted by this exemption.

Special Circumstances

Special circumstances, in accordance with 10 CFR 50.12, are present whenever application of the regulation in the particular circumstances is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The underlying purpose of 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K to 10 CFR part 50 is to establish acceptance criteria for emergency core cooling system performance. The wording of the regulations in 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K is not directly applicable to these advanced cladding alloys, even though the evaluations discussed above show that the intent of the regulations is met. Therefore, since the underlying purpose of 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K is achieved with the use of these advanced cladding alloys, the special circumstances required by 10 CFR 50.12 for the granting of an exemption from 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K exist.

4.0 Conclusion

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security. Also, special circumstances are present. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants SNC exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.46, and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, to allow the limited use of two LTAs with selected rods clad with GNF-Ziron cladding during fuel cycles 21 through 23 for the HNP-2 plant.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (73 FR 65415; November 3, 2008).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 7th day of November 2008.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Joseph G. Giitter,

Director, Division of Operating Reactor Licensing, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. E8-27102 Filed 11-13-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

POSTAL SERVICE

International Product Change—Canada Post—United States Postal Service Contractual Bilateral Agreement for Inbound Market-Dominant Services

AGENCY: Postal Service™.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service gives notice of its intent to file a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission to add the Canada Post—United States Postal Service Contractual Bilateral Agreement for Inbound Market-Dominant Services to the Market-Dominant Products List pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3642 and of its exercise of its authority to adjust rates for that product pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3622.

DATES: November 14, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Margaret M. Falwell, 703-292-3576.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Postal Service® hereby gives notice that it intends to file with the Postal Regulatory Commission, on or about November 14, 2008, a *Request of United States Postal Service to Add Canada Post—United States Postal Service Contractual Bilateral Agreement for Inbound Market-Dominant Services to the Market-Dominant Product List, Notice of Type 2 Rate Adjustment, and Notice of Filing (Under Seal) Negotiated Service Agreement and Enabling Governors' Resolution*. The Postal Service further provides notice that it has determined to exercise its statutory authority to make a Type 2 rate adjustment for the proposed market dominant postal product. The implementation date for these rates is January 1, 2009. Documents are or will be available at on the Postal Regulatory Commission's Web site, <http://www.prc.gov>.

Neva R. Watson,

Attorney, Legislative.

[FR Doc. E8-27148 Filed 11-13-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710-12-P

POSTAL SERVICE

Sunshine Act Meeting

Board Votes To Close October 31, 2008, Meeting

By telephone vote on October 31, 2008, the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service voted unanimously to close to public observation its meeting held via teleconference. The Board determined that prior public notice was not possible.

ITEMS CONSIDERED:

1. Pricing.
2. Personnel Matters and Compensation Issues.

GENERAL COUNSEL CERTIFICATION: The General Counsel of the United States Postal Service has certified that the meeting was properly closed under the Government in the Sunshine Act.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Requests for information about the meeting should be addressed to the Secretary of the Board, Julie S. Moore, at (202) 268-4800.

Julie S. Moore,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. E8-27146 Filed 11-12-08; 11:15 am]

BILLING CODE 7710-12-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 6424]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Youth Leadership Program With Algeria, the Philippines, or Serbia

Announcement Type: New Grant.
Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-09-10.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Application Deadline: January 9, 2009.

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for Youth Leadership Programs supporting exchanges with Algeria, the Philippines, or Serbia. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit separate proposals for grants that will support youth and adult participants from one of these three countries in a U.S.-based exchange program that explores civic education, leadership development, respect for diversity, and community activism. The program will conclude with follow-on activities in the participants' home countries in which they apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the exchange experience.

I. Funding Opportunity Description:

Authority: Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the