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Purpose of Meeting: To provide advice and recommendations concerning NSF science and education activities within the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

Agenda:

Briefing on current status of Directorate.
Update and Discussion of MPS Long-term Planning Activities.

Review by MPSAC of Committee of Visitors Report for The Division of Physics.

Meeting of MPSAC with Divisions within MPS Directorate.

Summary Minutes: May be obtained from the contact person listed above.

Dated: March 4, 2003.

Susanne E. Bolton,

Committee Management Officer.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-313 and 50-368]

Entergy Operations, Inc.; Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Renewed Facility Operating License (FOL) No. DPR-51 and FOL No. NPF-6, issued to Entergy Operations, Inc. (the licensee), for operation of Arkansas Nuclear One (ANO), Units 1 and 2 (ANO-1 and ANO-2), respectively, located in Pope County, Arkansas.

The proposed amendments would allow the licensee to use the spent fuel crane (L-3 crane) to lift heavy loads in excess of 100 tons. Specifically the licensee is requesting approval to use the upgraded L-3 crane for loads up to a total of 130 tons.

The amendment application was submitted on an exigent basis because the need for a license amendment was identified as a result of recent discussions between the licensee and NRC staff. The licensee had previously believed that prior NRC approval was not required to use the upgraded L-3 crane for heavy loads in excess of 100 tons. Approval to use the upgraded L-3 crane on an exigent basis is necessary for several reasons, including: (1) Numerous activities associated with

loading and un-loading the cask are required to be demonstrated by the user prior to the first usage with spent fuel, in accordance with the certificate of compliance for the new spent fuel storage cask system; (2) prior to the certificate-required demonstrations, detailed checkout of the equipment and sufficient training, including on-the-job use of the equipment, must occur to provide assurance of craft and supervisory proficiency; (3) there is insufficient space in the ANO-2 spent fuel pool and dry storage racks to store all of the fuel required for the fall 2003 ANO-2 refueling outage, unless at least one cask is loaded; (4) another cask needs to be loaded prior to the refueling outage to avoid having to perform an in-core shuffle of control element assemblies; and (5) the loading of one more cask (total of three) prior to the fall refueling outage, combined with storage spaces recovered as a result of installation of the new neutron poison panels, will ensure capability of full core discharge to the spent fuel pool following the refueling outage. The licensee provided a detailed timetable of the above activities which demonstrates over the next seven months the complexity involved with managing the spent fuel pool inventories. In addition, the licensee believes that the need to optimize pool storage space, the increased impact on the ANO-2 spent fuel pool activity management, and the possible constraints described above, creates a significant plant cost and fuel control concern. Therefore, the licensee has requested the proposed amendment be issued by March 31, 2003.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendment, 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 amendment request involves 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 amendment 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. Does the proposed change involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated?

Response: No.

The potential load carrying capability of the new L-3 crane has been increased from 100 tons to 130 tons. The transporting of a spent fuel cask is the maximum load that the crane is designed to handle. The process for transporting of a cask is essentially unchanged from that previously performed. Once a cask is loaded with spent fuel it is lifted from the cask loading pit, transported to the hatch, and lowered to the railroad bay. This arrangement is such that the cask is never carried over the spent fuel pool. The transport height of the cask has been increased to a minimum of 1.5 feet and the impact limiters used under the previous cask transport process have been eliminated. Because the crane is single failure proof, a postulated cask drop is no longer a credible event; therefore, no [a]ffects on plant operation are anticipated to occur and the structural integrity of the spent fuel cask will not be impaired.

The probability of a load drop is reduced from that previously analyzed since the crane is single failure proof and the likelihood of a drop is no longer considered credible. If a portion of the L-3 lifting devices malfunction or fail, the crane system is designed such that the load will move a limited distance downward prior to backup restraints becoming engaged. An increased minimum transport height (1.5 feet) is established to accommodate this design feature. [A single malfunction or failure of a portion of the crane will prevent the load from being dropped. This will allow additional restrictions such as impact limiters to be removed. The radiological consequences will not be increased.] The impact on the spent fuel contained in the cask has been analyzed under an assumed dropped cask event and has been determined to be within design basis limits. Heavy loads are restricted from being moved over the spent fuel pools in accordance with ANO technical specifications.

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

2. Does the proposed change create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated?

Response: No.

The ANO Safety Analysis Reports (SARs) have previously analyzed the drop of a cask up to 100 tons. This was as a result of a potential spent fuel cask drop event. The cask load has been increased to 130 tons under the new single failure proof L-3 crane design for heavier casks being employed at ANO. This increased load could provide a more severe impact on safety related equipment that exists in areas below the load path if a load drop event were to occur. However, to ensure that no safety related equipment or control rooms are impacted, the construction of a single failure proof crane mitigates the potential for a more severe consequence to that already analyzed