

an interested person, or upon its own initiative, grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55 when the exemptions are authorized by law and will not endanger life or property and are otherwise in the public interest. The exemption being requested for Crystal River is to alleviate potential scheduling difficulties associated with administering requalification examinations and completing the requalification program at the end of the 2004 calendar year. Moving the end of the requalification program to February 28, 2005, would: (1) Minimize the fall refueling outage impact on requalification examination development; (2) minimize the potential impact from any fall refueling outage extensions; (3) minimize the scheduling and resource impact from both the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays; (4) minimize the potential scheduling and resource impact of any examination remediation or retesting requirements during the holidays; and (5) minimize the potential impact from future bargaining unit negotiations, which occur periodically in the fourth calendar quarter.

Although the 24-month schedule requirement of 10 CFR 55.59 at Crystal River would be exceeded, operator performance continues to be satisfactory, as demonstrated by the operators' strong performance during the recent end-of-cycle requalification examinations. Granting this exemption will allow Crystal River to continue with safe plant operations without undue hardship to plant personnel and Crystal River licensed operators.

4.0 Conclusion

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 55.11, granting an exemption to the licensee from the schedule requirements in 10 CFR 55.59, by allowing Crystal River a one-time extension in the allowed time for completing the current licensed operator requalification program, is authorized by law and will not endanger life or property and is otherwise in the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants Florida Power Corporation an exemption on a one-time only basis from the schedule requirement of 10 CFR 55.59, to allow the completion date for the current licensed operator requalification program for the Crystal River Unit 3 Nuclear Generating Plant to be extended from December 31, 2004, to February 28, 2005. The next requalification program period would begin March 1, 2005, and continue for 24 months to February 28, 2007, with

successive periods running for 24 months.

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 (68 FR 25069).

This exemption is effective upon issuance and expires on February 28, 2005.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 14th day of May 2003.

Bruce A. Boger,

Director, Division of Inspection Program Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 03-12598 Filed 5-19-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 70-7001 and 70-7002]

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant, Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, United States Enrichment Corporation; Notice of Request for Certificate Renewal and Opportunity for Comment

I. Receipt of Application and Availability of Documents

Notice is hereby given that the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) has received by letters dated April 11, 2003, applications from the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) for the renewal of the certificates of compliance for the gaseous diffusion plants (GDPs) located near Paducah, Kentucky and Piketon, Ohio. The NRC issued the initial certificates of compliance for the GDPs on November 26, 1996, and assumed regulatory oversight for the GDPs on March 3, 1997. The GDPs were last issued renewed certificates of compliance on January 29, 1999. Those certificates expire December 31, 2003. The USEC renewal requests are for a five-year period, extending from the current expiration date of December 31, 2003, to December 31, 2008. The USEC applications for renewal contain a revised Depleted Uranium Management Plan and a revised Decommissioning Funding Plan but do not contain any other changes to the existing Application and Safety Analysis Report. The USEC application for the renewal of the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant is based on USEC's previous Application, as revised through Revision 81 dated April 11, 2003, and USEC's previous Compliance Plan, as revised through Revision 9 dated December 1, 2000. No additional changes to the Application or

Compliance Plan are requested. The USEC application for the renewal of the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant is based on USEC's previous Application, as revised through Revision 65 dated April 11, 2003, and USEC's previous Compliance Plan, as revised through Revision 11 dated January 31, 2003. No additional changes to the Application or Compliance Plan are requested.

Copies of the renewal application for certification (except for classified and proprietary portions which are withheld in accordance with 10 CFR 2.790, "Availability of Public Records") are available for inspection at NRC's Public Electronic Reading Room at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Documents may also be examined and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room, located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20854.

II. Notice of Comment Period

Any interested party may submit written comments on the application for renewal of the certificate of compliance for either the Paducah plant or the Portsmouth plant for consideration by the staff. To be certain of consideration, comments must be received by (insert date 30 days from day of publication).

Comments received after the due date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the Commission is able to assure consideration only for comments received on or before this date. Written comments on the application should be mailed to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, or may be hand delivered to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 between 7:45 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays. Comments should be legible and reproducible, and include the name, affiliation (if any), and address of the comment provider. All comments received by the Commission will be made available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room located in Rockville, MD.

Following evaluation of USEC's applications for renewal, and any public comments received, the Commission staff will issue a written decision, and publish notice of the decision in the **Federal Register**. Upon publication of the notice of decision, any person whose interest may be affected may then request review of the decision within 30 days, pursuant to 10 CFR 76.62(c) or 76.64(d), whichever applies.