

G, establish an adequate margin to brittle failure during normal operation, anticipated operational occurrences, and system hydrostatic tests.

ASME B&PV Code, Section XI, Code Case N-640 permits the use of an alternate reference fracture toughness curve for reactor pressure vessel materials for use in determining the P-T limits. ASME Code Case N-640 permits the use of alternate reference fracture toughness (*i.e.*, use of " K_{IC} fracture toughness curve" instead of " K_{IA} fracture toughness curve," where K_{IC} and K_{IA} are "Reference Stress Intensity Factors," as defined in ASME Code, Section XI, Appendices A and G, respectively) for reactor vessel materials in determining the P-T limits. Since the K_{IC} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A-2200-1, provides greater allowable fracture toughness than the corresponding K_{IA} fracture toughness curve of ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G-2210-1, using ASME Code Case N-640 to establish the P-T limits would be less conservative than the methodology currently endorsed by 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G. Therefore, an exemption to apply ASME Code Case N-640 is required.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated September 6, 2002, as supplemented by letter dated December 19, 2002 and June 24, 2003.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed exemption is needed to allow the licensee to implement ASME Code Case N-640 in order to revise the method used to determine the P-T limits because continued use of the present method for determining P-T limits unnecessarily restricts the P-T operating window. The two primary benefits to the licensee from the use of Code Case N-640 are:

- Challenges to the operators would be reduced since the requirements for maintaining high-vessel temperature during pressure testing would be lessened.
- Enhanced personnel safety would result because of the lower temperatures which would exist during the conduct of inspections in primary containment.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the use of the alternative analysis method to support the revision of the reactor coolant system P-T limits.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types or significant increase in the amounts of effluents that may be released offsite, 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 SQN, dated February 13, 1974.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

On July 15, 2003, the staff consulted with the Tennessee State official, Ms. Elizabeth Flannagan, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of this 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 September 6, 2002, as supplemented by letter dated December 19, 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.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of July 2003.

For The Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Allen G. Howe,

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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; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendment to Facility Operating License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Tennessee Valley Authority (the licensee) to withdraw its May 22, 2003, application for proposed amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-77 and DPR-79 for the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

The proposed amendment would have revised the limiting condition for operation for Technical Specification (TS) Section 3.7.5, "Ultimate Heat Sink." The licensee requested that the maximum emergency raw cooling water temperature requirement in TS 3.7.5.b be increased from 83 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) to 87 °F and that the minimum ultimate heat sink water elevation in TS 3.7.5.a be increased from 670 feet to 674 feet.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on July 8, 2003 (68 FR 40719). However, by letter dated July 17, 2003, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated May 22, 2003, and the licensee's letter dated July 17, 2003,