

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-458]

Entergy Gulf States and Cajun Electric Power Cooperative; Notice of Consideration of Approval of Transfer of License and Issuance of Conforming License Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an order approving, under 10 CFR 50.80, the transfer of Facility Operating License No. NPF-47 to the extent now held by Cajun Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (Cajun) to Entergy Gulf States, Inc. (EGSI, the licensee) with respect to River Bend Station, Unit 1 (RBS), located in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, and issuance of conforming amendments under 10 CFR 50.90.

RBS presently is jointly owned by EGSI (70%) and Cajun (30%) with EGSI authorized to act as agent for Cajun. Entergy Operations, Inc. (EOI), a non-owner of the facility, is licensed to have exclusive responsibility and control over the operation and maintenance of the facility. Cajun is proposing to transfer its 30% minority ownership interest to EGSI, resulting in EGSI becoming the sole owner of RBS. The license would be amended to reflect the transfer of ownership.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80, the Commission may approve the transfer of a license, or any right thereunder, after notice to interested persons. Such approval is contingent upon the Commission's determination that the proposed transferee is qualified to hold the license and that the transfer is otherwise consistent with applicable provisions of law, regulations, and orders of the Commission. If the Commission determines that approval should be given, it will issue an order setting forth its consent to the transfer.

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.

The Commission has made a proposed determination 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), Cajun, with the consent and endorsement of EGSI, has provided their analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

Applying the three standards set forth in 10 CFR [Section] 50.92, the proposed change to the Operating License involves no significant hazards consideration:

1. The proposed change will not involve an increase in the probability or consequences of any accident previously evaluated. As a result of the proposed license amendment, there will be no physical change to the River Bend facility, and all Limiting Conditions for Operation, Limiting Safety System Settings and Safety Limits specified in the Technical Specifications will remain unchanged. Also, the River Bend Quality Assurance Program, Emergency Plan, Security Plan, and Operator Training and Requalification Program will be unaffected. The employees of EOI presently engaged in operation of River Bend and organization structure of EOI and EGSI will be unaffected by the proposed amendment. Therefore, personnel qualifications will remain unchanged.

2. The proposed amendment will not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated. The proposed amendment will have no effect on the physical configuration of River Bend or the manner in which it will operate. The plant design and design basis will remain the same. The current plant safety analyses will therefore remain complete and accurate in addressing the design basis events and in analyzing plant response and consequences.

The Limiting Conditions for Operations, Limiting Safety System Settings and Safety Limits specified in the Technical Specifications for River Bend are not affected by the proposed license amendment. As such, the plant conditions for which the design basis accident analyses have been performed will remain valid. Therefore, the proposed license amendment cannot create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

3. The proposed amendment will not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. Plant safety margins are established through Limiting Conditions for Operation, Limiting Safety System Settings and Safety Limits specified in the Technical Specifications. Since there will be no change to the physical design or operation of the plant, there will be no change to any of these margins. Thus, the proposed license amendment will not involve a significant reduction in any margin of safety.

The NRC staff has reviewed the foregoing analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff

proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 30 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 30-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 30-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish in the **Federal Register** a notice of issuance and provide for opportunity for a hearing after issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and should cite the publication date and page number of this **Federal Register** notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room 6D22, Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC.

The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By November 24, 1997, Cajun may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of an order regarding the proposed transfer of the license to the extent now held by Cajun to EGSI and issuance of the conforming amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the

Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714 which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Government Documents Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the

hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If a hearing is requested, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it immediately effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to Mary A. Murphy, LeBoeuf, Lamb, Green, & MacRae, L.L.P., 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20009, attorney for Cajun.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained

absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1) (i)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated October 15, 1997, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Government Documents Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 21st, day of October 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

David L. Wigginton,

Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate IV-1, Division of Reactor Projects III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-255]

Consumers Energy Company Palisades Plant; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations for Facility Operating License No. DPR-20, issued to Consumers Energy Company, (the licensee), for operation of the Palisades Plant located in Van Buren County, Michigan.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt Consumers Energy from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24(a), which requires a monitoring system that will energize clear audible alarms if accidental criticality occurs in each area in which special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored. The proposed action would also exempt the licensee from the requirements to maintain emergency procedures for each area in which this licensed special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored to ensure that all personnel withdraw to an area of safety upon the sounding of the alarm, to familiarize personnel with the evacuation plan, and to designate