

Dated: July 21, 1997.

M. Rebecca Winkler,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-19523 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Special Emphasis Panel in Geosciences: Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92463, as amended), the National Science Foundation announces the following meeting.

Name: Special Emphasis Panel in Geosciences (1756).

Date and Time: August 18, 19 and 20, 8:30 a.m.

Place: National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230, Room 770.

Type of Meeting: Closed.

Contact Person: Ms. Jewel Prendeville, Program Coordinator for the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research and Lower Atmospheric Facility Oversight Section; Division of Atmospheric Sciences; Room 775; 4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22230; telephone number (703) 306-1521.

Purpose of Meeting: To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals as part of the selection process of awards.

Agenda: To review and evaluate Professional Opportunities for Women in Research and Education (POWRE) proposals as part of the selection process for awards.

Reason For closing: The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempted under 5 U.S.C. 552b (c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated July 21, 1997.

M. Rebecca Winkler,

Committee Management Office.

[FR Doc. 97-19524 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Special Emphasis Panel in Networking & Communications Research & Infrastructure; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation announces the following meeting.

Name: Special Emphasis Panel in Networking & Communications Research & Infrastructure (1207).

Date and Time: August 21-22, 1997; 8:30 AM-5:00 PM.

Place: Rooms 1175 National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230.

Type of Meeting: Closed.

Contact Person: Dr. Mark Luker, Program Director, CISE/NCRI, Room 1175, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Room 725, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: (703) 306-1950.

Purpose of Meeting: To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

Agenda: Reverse site visit to review and evaluate Very High-Speed Backbone Network Service (vBNS) proposals as part of the selection process for awards.

Reason for Closing: The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: July 21, 1997.

M. Rebecca Winkler,

Committee Management Officer.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 040-7580]

Finding of No Significant Impact and Notice of Opportunity for a Hearing on Renewal of Source Material License SMB-911 for Fansteel, Inc. in Muskogee, Oklahoma

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Finding of no significant impact and notice of opportunity for a hearing on renewal of source material license SMB-911 for Fansteel, Inc. in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering the renewal of Source Material License SMB-911 for the recovery of Work in Progress (WIP) pond residues at the Fansteel, Inc. (Fansteel) plant located in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The facility will process on-site pond residues to recover valuable metals and to reduce the volume of on-site radioactive materials. The staff has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action, because the renewal will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment for reasons described in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Summary of the Environmental Assessment

Background

Fansteel has been licensed by the NRC to possess and use source materials at their Muskogee, Oklahoma plant since January 1967. Fansteel was authorized to process ore concentrates and tin slags in the production of refined tantalum products. Fansteel ceased operations in 1990, but on June 20, 1994, submitted a renewal application to reprocess WIP residues located on-site, which were generated as a result of the initial hydrofluoric acid digestion of the ore concentrates. The WIP process will isolate the radioactivity such that the bulk of the WIP material can be used commercially while minimizing the volume of material sent for radioactive waste disposal.

Fansteel's current license expired in July 1994. However, because Fansteel submitted a renewal application on June 20, 1994, the existing license continues to be effective until the application for renewal has been finally determined by the staff in accordance with the timely renewal provision of 10 CFR 40.42(a)(1).

On March 25, 1997, Fansteel was granted an amendment to their license to allow processing of the WIP residues. Renewal of the license was not completed at that time due to unresolved decommissioning issues. Specifically, Fansteel has proposed to dispose of contaminated soils in an on-site containment cell. An EA is currently under development by the NRC, which considers this disposal option. However, the NRC staff has determined that the issue of on-site disposal of contaminated soils will be resolved as a separate licensing action, and, therefore, the NRC staff is now considering renewal of the license.

An EA dated June 17, 1996, was prepared to support the March 25, 1997, WIP amendment and a FONSI was published in the **Federal Register** on June 24, 1996 (61 FR 32466). The scope of the EA included processing of the WIP material, associated waste treatment processes, as well as groundwater remediation. Because the scope of this EA includes all processes to be authorized in renewal of the Fansteel license, the FONSI for license renewal is based on the WIP amendment EA.

Following issuance of the amendment authorizing WIP processing, Fansteel indicated that in conjunction with recovery of metal values from the WIP residues Fansteel also plans to recover fluorides from the waste treatment ponds. This activity, like on-site

disposal of contaminated soils, was not covered under the WIP amendment or the EA. Therefore, it will not be authorized with renewal of the Fansteel license and, instead, will be considered as a separate licensing action following renewal. When the issues of on-site disposal and fluoride recovery are considered under separate licensing actions, the environmental impacts from these operations will be considered in conjunction with impacts from all operations at the site.

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to renew Source Material License SMB-911 to allow Fansteel to retrieve and process WIP material from on-site ponds. Processing of the WIP material will recover tantalum, columbium (niobium), titanium, and scandium from the pond residues. This WIP material recovery will be achieved by a series of proprietary chemical processes to separate the remaining metals from the residues. Uranium and thorium will be separated from the other products as uranium and thorium hydroxides. Waste materials from this process contaminated with natural uranium and thorium will be packaged and stored for off-site disposal.

The proposed action does not include recovery of fluoride from the calcium fluoride materials in the waste treatment ponds at the site or on-site disposal of contaminated soils. These activities will be considered as separate licensing actions following renewal.

The Need for the Proposed Action

Renewal of the license is needed to allow Fansteel to process the WIP pond residues. The WIP process will isolate the radioactivity such that the bulk of the WIP material can be used commercially while minimizing the volume of material sent for radioactive waste disposal.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

Operation of the WIP recovery process at the Fansteel facility will result in airborne, liquid and solid effluents. Airborne effluents will be controlled through the use of appropriate filters and wet scrubbers, as necessary. Liquid effluents including scrubber liquids, laboratory waste-waters, and chemical processing waste-waters, will be treated through a waste-water treatment system prior to discharge to the Arkansas River through a permitted National Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) outfall. Solid wastes from the WIP process will be packaged and stored for disposal at a licensed off-site facility.

Fansteel will monitor these effluent streams, as well as groundwater in 25 wells, to assess impacts from the facility and demonstrate compliance with appropriate NRC regulations.

In order to estimate human health impacts, a dose assessment was conducted as described in the EA. The total effective dose equivalent (TEDE) from inhalation of radionuclides emitted during WIP processing was estimated to be less than 0.01 mSv (1 mrem) per year to a hypothetical maximally exposed individual (MEI) located at the site boundary in the most frequent downwind direction. The TEDE to the MEI was also estimated for ingestion of water discharged to the Arkansas River, and was shown to be much less than 0.05 mSv (5 mrem) per year, due to the low concentration of radionuclides in the discharge as well as dilution in the river. These estimated doses are small fractions of the NRC limit specified in 10 CFR 20.1301 of 1.0 mSv (100 mrem) for members of the public.

The EA also considered impacts on the surrounding environment from the WIP operation. The facility is not expected to have an adverse impact on surface water, groundwater, or soil quality. In fact, there is expected to be a potential benefit, since removal of source material in the ponds will reduce the potential for groundwater, surface water, and soil contamination in the future. In addition, Fansteel has committed to continue remediation of past groundwater contamination from a pond leak in 1989 under the provisions of the renewed license.

Environmental impacts of the proposed action are described in greater detail in the EA dated June 17, 1996, and the associated FONSI published in the **Federal Register** on June 24, 1996 (61 FR 32466). The documents also include more detailed descriptions of Fansteel's effluent and environmental monitoring programs, as well as a discussion of possible doses and potential accidents resulting from operation of the Fansteel facility.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In preparation of the EA the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Hazards Management and Waste Services, Radiation Control Program, Water Quality Division was consulted.

Finding of no Significant Impact

The NRC has prepared an EA related to the renewal of Source Material License SMB-911. On the basis of this assessment, NRC has concluded that environmental impacts that would be

created by the proposed licensing action would not be significant and do not warrant the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Accordingly, it has been determined that a finding of no significant impact is appropriate.

The EA, the license renewal application, and other documents related to this proposed action are available for public inspection and copying at the Commission's public document room in NRC's Region IV office, Harris Tower, 611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 400, Arlington, Texas 76011-8064, and in NRC's headquarters public document room, Gelman Building, 2120 L St., NW., Washington, DC 20037.

Opportunity for a Hearing

Based on the EA and accompanying safety evaluation, NRC is preparing to renew License SMB-911. The NRC hereby provides that this is a proceeding on an application for renewal of a license falling within the scope of Subpart L, "Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudication in Materials Licensing Proceedings," of NRC's rules and practice for domestic licensing proceedings in 10 CFR Part 2. Pursuant to § 2.1205(a), any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing in accordance with § 2.1205(d). A request for a hearing must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date of publication of this **Federal Register** notice.

The request for a hearing must be filed with the Office of Secretary either:

1. By delivery to the Docketing and Service Branch of the Secretary at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852-2738; or

2. By mail or telegram addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555. Attention: Docketing and Service Branch.

In addition to meeting other applicable requirements of 10 CFR Part 2 of the NRC's regulations, a request for a hearing filed by a person other than an applicant must describe in detail:

1. The interest of the requester in the proceeding;
2. How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding, including the reasons why the requestor should be permitted a hearing, with particular reference to the factors set out in § 2.1205(h);
3. The requester's areas of concern about the licensing activity that is the subject matter of the proceeding; and

4. The circumstances establishing that the request for a hearing is timely in accordance with § 2.1205(d).

In accordance with 10 CFR § 2.1205(f), each request for a hearing must also be served, by delivering it personally or by mail to:

1. The applicant, Fansteel, Inc., Number Ten Tantalum Place, Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403-9296; Attention: John J. Hunter; and

2. The NRC staff, by delivery to the Executive Director for Operations, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, or by mail, addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of July 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Michael F. Weber,

Chief, Licensing Branch, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, NMSS.

[FR Doc. 97-19489 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket 70-7001]

Notice of Amendment to Certificate of Compliance GDP-1 for the U.S. Enrichment Corporation, Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant, Paducah, Kentucky

The Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, has made a determination that the following amendment request is not significant in accordance with 10 CFR 76.45. In making that determination, the staff concluded that: (1) There is no change in the types or significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite; (2) there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure; (3) there is no significant construction impact; (4) there is no significant increase in the potential for, or radiological or chemical consequences from, previously analyzed accidents; (5) the proposed changes do not result in the possibility of a new or different kind of accident; (6) there is no significant reduction in any margin of safety; and (7) the proposed changes will not result in an overall decrease in the effectiveness of the plant's safety, safeguards or security programs. The basis for this determination for the amendment request is shown below.

The NRC staff has reviewed the certificate amendment application and concluded that it provides reasonable

assurance of adequate safety, safeguards, and security, and compliance with NRC requirements. Therefore, the Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, is prepared to issue an amendment to the Certificate of Compliance for the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The staff has prepared a Compliance Evaluation Report which provides details of the staff's evaluation.

The NRC staff has determined that this amendment satisfies the criteria for a categorical exclusion in accordance with 10 CFR 51.22. Therefore, pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b), no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared for this amendment.

USEC or any person whose interest may be affected may file a petition, not exceeding 30 pages, requesting review of the Director's Decision. The petition must be filed with the Commission not later than 15 days after publication of this **Federal Register** Notice. A petition for review of the Director's Decision shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner and how that interest may be affected by the results of the decision. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why review of the Decision should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) The interest of the petitioner; (2) how that interest may be affected by the Decision, including the reasons why the petitioner should be permitted a review of the Decision; and (3) the petitioner's areas of concern about the activity that is the subject matter of the Decision. Any person described in this paragraph (USEC or any person who filed a petition) may file a response to any petition for review, not to exceed 30 pages, within 10 days after filing of the petition. If no petition is received within the designated 15-day period, the Director will issue the final amendment to the Certificate of Compliance without further delay. If a petition for review is received, the decision on the amendment application will become final in 60 days, unless the Commission grants the petition for review or otherwise acts within 60 days after publication of this **Federal Register** Notice.

A petition for review must be filed with the Secretary, 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.

For further details with respect to the action see (1) the application for

amendment and (2) the Commission's Compliance Evaluation Report. These items are 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.

Date of amendment request: October 31, 1996, revised February 14, and June 16, 1997.

Brief description of amendment: The amendment proposes a new Technical Safety Requirement for the autoclave manual isolation system in the feed facilities and makes the system a Q system under the quality assurance program.

Basis for finding of no significance:

1. The proposed amendment will not result in a change in the types or significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite.

TSR 2.4.4.13 is a new TSR to cover the autoclave manual isolation system installed for the feed facilities. This system provides a remote method of simultaneously isolating all the autoclaves in the facility in the event of an observed release of uranium hexafluoride from piping outside the autoclave. This new system enhances the operators ability to isolate the feed autoclaves in the event of a leak. As such, these changes have no impact on plant effluents and will not result in any impact to the environment.

2. The proposed amendment will not result in a significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.

The proposed changes provide an enhanced ability to isolate the autoclaves in the event of a leak, thereby mitigating the consequences of a postulated accident. The changes will not increase exposure.

3. The proposed amendment will not result in a significant construction impact.

The proposed changes will not result in any building construction, therefore, there will be no construction impacts.

4. The proposed amendment will not result in a significant increase in the potential for, or radiological or chemical consequences from, previously analyzed accidents.

The proposed changes enhance the operator's ability to isolate the feed autoclaves in the event of a leak in the piping outside the autoclave and affect no other equipment functions. The autoclave manual isolation system is not involved in any precursor to an evaluated accident; therefore, the potential of occurrence of an evaluated event is unaffected. The consequences