Contact Person: Dr. Karen Kindle, Program Director for Biochemistry of Gene Expression, Room 655, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230. (703) 306–1441.

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

Agenda: To review and evaluate research proposals submitted to the Biochemistry of Gene Expression Program 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: March 23, 1998.

M. Rebecca Winkler,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 98–7929 Filed 3–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555–01–M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Advisory Panel for Cell Biology; 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: Advisory Panel for Cell Biology (1136).

Date and Time: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, April 15, 16 and 17, 1998; 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Place: National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 330, Arlington, VA 22230.

Type of Meeting: Closed.

Contact Persons: Drs. Barbara Zain and Richard D. Rodewald, Program Directors for the Cell Biology Program, National Science Foundation, Room 655 South, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: 703/306–1442.

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

Agenda: To review and evaluate research proposals submitted to the Cell Biology Program 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. 522b(c) (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: March 23, 1998.

Rebecca M. Winkler,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 98–7930 Filed 3–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555–01–M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–237]

Commonwealth Edison Company; 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 (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR–19, issued to Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd, the licensee), for operation of the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Unit 2, located in Grundy County, Illinois.

The proposed amendment would reflect a change in the Dresden, Unit 2, minimum critical power ratio (MCPR) Safety Limit and revise footnotes in Technical Specifications (TS) Section 5.3, to allow the use of Siemens Power Corporation (SPC) ATRIUM–9B fuel.

This request for amendment was submitted under exigent circumstances to support Dresden, Unit 2, Cycle 16, operation which is scheduled to begin on April 12, 1998. The licensee had submitted an application for TS amendments on August 29, 1997, (published on January 14, 1998 at 63 FR 227) citing SPC Topical for Revised ANFB Correlation Uncertainty, ANF–1125(P), Supplement 1, Appendix D, to allow the use of SPC ATRIUM–9B fuel. However, the need for additional information has delayed the review of this topical report. To ensure that use of ATRIUM–9B fuel is approved in time for the scheduled Unit 2 startup, ComEd determined that it would submit this one-time cycle-specific amendment request proposing an interim conservative approach to calculating the MCPR Safety Limit. The time necessary for ComEd to develop this TS request would not allow the normal 30-day period for public comment to support Dresden, Unit 2, startup on April 12, 1998. However, should startup on Dresden, Unit 2, be delayed enough to allow the normal 30-day period for public comment, this amendment will not be issued until expiration of the normal 30-day period for public comment.

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. Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated:

The probability of an evaluated accident is derived from the probabilities of the individual precursors to that accident. The consequences of an evaluated accident are determined by the operability of plant systems designed to mitigate those consequences. Limits have been established consistent with NRC approved methods to ensure that fuel performance during normal, transient, and accident conditions is acceptable. This change does not affect the operability of plant systems, nor does it compromise any fuel performance limits.

Revision to Cycle Specific Footnotes for Dresden 2 Cycle 16 Operation With ATRIUM–9B

The revisions to the footnotes in [Technical Specification] Section 5.3 have no implications for accident analysis or plant operations. The purpose of the revisions to the footnotes is to allow operation of Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 with an interim conservative approach to calculating the MCPR Safety Limit. This is the same approach that was NRC approved for use for Dresden Unit 3 Cycle 15 and Quad Cities Unit 2 Cycle 15. The Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 MCPR Safety Limit was calculated using an interim additive constant uncertainty. The MCPR Safety Limit is used in the determination of the cycle's MCPR Operating Limit. The MCPR Operating Limit ensures that the MCPR Safety Limit is not violated for any anticipated operational occurrence. This revision does not affect any plant equipment or processes; therefore, there is no alteration in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

Revision to the MCPR Safety Limit

Changing the MCPR Safety Limit for Dresden Unit 2 from 1.08 to 1.09 will not increase the probability of an accident previously evaluated. Additionally, operational MCPR limits will be applied that will ensure the MCPR Safety Limit is not violated during all modes of operation and anticipated operational occurrences. Changing the MCPR Safety Limit will not alter any physical systems or operating procedures. The Dresden Unit 2 MCPR Safety Limit is set to 1.09, which is a critical power

ratio value where less than 0.1% of the rods in the core are expected to experience transition boiling. This application for amendment does not change the criterion of ensuring that less than 0.1% of the rods in the core are calculated to experience transition boiling when the core is at the MCPR Safety Limit. Therefore, the probability or consequences of an accident will not increase.

2. Create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated:

Creation of the possibility of a new or different kind of accident would require the creation of one or more new precursors of that accident. New accident precursors may be created by modifications to the plant configuration or changes in allowable modes of operation. Other than the use of a full reload of ATRIUM–9B fuel in Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 in Modes 1 and 2, this Technical Specification submittal does not involve any modifications to the plant configuration or allowable modes of operation. The operation with a full reload of ATRIUM–9B was previously approved for Dresden Unit 3 Cycle 15. The ATRIUM–9B fuel is compatible with the existing 9x9–2 fuel in the Dresden Unit 2 core. No new precursors of an accident are created and no new or different kinds of accidents are created. Therefore, the proposed changes do not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

Revision To Cycle Specific Footnotes for Dresden 2 Cycle 16 Operation With ATRIUM–9B

The revision to the cycle specific footnotes in Section 5.3 is necessary to allow operation of Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16. This revision will not alter any plant systems, equipment or physical conditions of the site. Revising the footnotes in Section 5.3 allows operation with a reload of ATRIUM–9B in Modes 1 and 2 for Unit 2 Cycle 16, which has previously been approved for Dresden Unit 3 Cycle 15. This revision is based on the fact that an interim conservative additive constant uncertainty has been used to calculate the Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 MCPR Safety Limit. NRC approval of this interim approach in determining the Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 MCPR Safety Limit will ensure that fuel limits are determined and cycle specific analyses are performed for Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 utilizing NRC approved methods. Therefore, no new or different kinds of accidents are created from this revision.

Revision to the MCPR Safety Limit

Changing the MCPR Safety Limit will not create the possibility of a new accident from an accident previously evaluated. This change will not alter or add any new equipment or change plant modes of operation. The MCPR Safety Limit is established to ensure that 99.9% of the rods avoid transition boiling. The new MCPR Safety Limit for Dresden Unit 2, 1.09, is greater than the current value of 1.08 and is consistent with MCPR Safety Limit calculations in support of Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 operation. Therefore, no new accidents are created that are different from those previously evaluated.

3. Involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety for the following reasons:

Revision to Cycle Specific Footnotes for Dresden 2 Cycle 16 Operation With ATRIUM–9B

The results of the analyses for Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 verify that, with an interim additive constant uncertainty, an MCPR Safety Limit of 1.09 is supportable with less then 0.1% of the rods predicted to experience transition boiling. Since there is sufficient margin to the amount of rods predicted to experience transition boiling, and a conservative interim approach has been used to calculate the additive constant uncertainty, removing the footnotes to enable Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16 to operate with ATRIUM–9B fuel will not reduce the margin of safety.

Revision to the MCPR Safety Limit

Changing the MCPR Safety Limit for Dresden Unit 2 will not involve any reduction in margin of safety. The MCPR Safety Limit provides a margin of safety by ensuring that less than 0.1% of the rods are expected to be in transition boiling if the MCPR Safety Limit is not violated. The proposed Technical Specification amendment to change the MCPR Safety Limit to 1.09 supports operation of Dresden Unit 2 Cycle 16. SPC used the ANFB critical power correlation with an interim ATRIUM–9B additive constant uncertainty to perform the MCPR Safety Limit calculations.

Because a conservative method is used to apply the ATRIUM–9B additive constant uncertainty in the MCPR Safety Limit calculation, a decrease in the margin to safety will not occur due to changing the MCPR Safety Limit. The revised Dresden Unit 2 MCPR Safety Limit will ensure the appropriate level of fuel protection. Additionally, operational limits will be established based on the proposed Dresden Unit 2 MCPR Safety Limit to ensure that the MCPR Safety Limit is not violated during all modes of operation including anticipated operational occurrences. This will ensure that the fuel design safety criterion of more than 99.9% of the fuel rods avoiding transition boiling during normal operation as well as during any anticipated operational occurrence is met.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's 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 by close of business (4:15 p.m. EST) within 14 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 14-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 14-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. 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 Review 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 6D59, 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 April 27, 1998, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the 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 Morris Area Public Library District, 604 Liberty Street, Morris, Illinois 60450. 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 a 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 the amendment is issued before the expiration of the 30-day hearing period, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. If a hearing is requested, 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 Michael I. Miller, Esquire; Sidley and Austin, One First National Plaza, Chicago, Illinois 60603, attorney for the licensee.

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 March 19, 1998, 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 Morris Area Public Library District, 604 Liberty Street, Morris, Illinois 60450.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of March, 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Lawrence W. Rossbach,

Project Manager Project Directorate III–2, Division of Reactor Projects—III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–8005 Filed 3–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 70–7002]

Notice of Amendment to Certificate of Compliance GDP–2 for the U.S. Enrichment Corporation, Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, Portsmouth, OH

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 Portsmouth 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