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Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 5th day of October 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 00-26483 Filed 10-13-00; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-272, 50-311]

In the Matter of PECO Energy Company (Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2) Order Approving Application Regarding Proposed Corporate Restructuring

I

PECO Energy Company (PECO) owns 42.59 percent of Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2 (the facility) and in connection therewith is a co-holder of Facility Operating Licenses Nos. DPR-70 and DPR-75, which authorize possession, use, and operation of the facility. PSEG Nuclear LLC, another co-owner of the facility, is the licensed operator. The facility is located in Salem County, New Jersey.

II

By application dated July 7, 2000, PECO requested approval of the proposed indirect transfer of the facility operating licenses to the extent now held by PECO to Exelon Corporation, to be formed in connection with the proposed merger of Unicom Corporation (Unicom), the parent of Commonwealth Edison Company and PECO. Supplemental information was provided by submittals dated July 13 and September 1, 2000. Hereinafter, the July 7, 2000, application and supplemental information will be referred to collectively as the "application."

Under the proposed merger, PECO will become a direct or indirect subsidiary of Exelon Corporation. The merger was previously the subject of an order dated August 3, 2000, by which the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved the transfer of the Salem licenses, to the extent held by PECO, to Exelon Generation Company, LLC (EGC). EGC will be formed in connection with the merger as an indirect subsidiary of Exelon Corporation to acquire the generating assets of PECO and Commonwealth Edison Company. The August 3, 2000, order effectively allows PECO's Salem assets to be transferred to EGC. According to the application here, the

transfer of these assets may be delayed beyond the closing of the merger. During this interim period, Exelon Corporation would be the direct parent of PECO as PECO continues to hold the Salem and other generating assets pending the receipt of necessary approvals to allow the generating assets to be transferred to EGC. Specifically, PECO would continue to hold a partial ownership interest in Salem, Units 1 and 2. PSEG Nuclear LLC would continue to be the sole operator of Salem, Units 1 and 2. The application does not involve any change with respect to the remaining ownership interests in the facility held by PSEG Nuclear LLC, Delmarva Power and Light Company, and Atlantic City Electric Company.

By a separate application dated July 7, 2000, Commonwealth Edison Company requested approval of the indirect transfer of the facility operating licenses that it holds to Exelon Corporation, which would occur under circumstances similar to the above for PECO. That application is being addressed separately.

Approval of the indirect transfer of the facility operating licenses was requested by PECO pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80. Notice of the request for approval and an opportunity for a hearing was published in the **Federal Register** on August 31, 2000 (65 FR 53046). The Commission received no comments or requests for hearing pursuant to such notice.

Under 10 CFR 50.80, no license, or any right thereunder, shall be transferred, directly or indirectly, through transfer of control of the license, unless the Commission shall give its consent in writing. Upon review of the information in the application by PECO, and other information before the Commission, the NRC staff has determined that the proposed corporate restructuring under which Exelon Corporation will become the parent of PECO will not affect the qualifications of PECO as a co-holder of the licenses described above, and that the indirect transfer of the licenses, to the extent effected by the proposed corporate restructuring, is otherwise consistent with applicable provisions of law, regulations, and orders issued by the Commission, subject to the conditions set forth below.

The findings set forth above are supported by a safety evaluation dated October 5, 2000.

III

Accordingly, pursuant to Sections 161b, 161i, 161o, and 184 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, 42

U.S.C. §§ 2201(b), 2201(i), 2201(o), and 2234; and 10 CFR 50.80, *It is hereby ordered* that the application regarding the indirect license transfers related to the proposed corporate restructuring is approved, subject to the following conditions:

(1) PECO shall provide the Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation a copy of any application, at the time it is filed, to transfer (excluding grants of security interests or liens) from PECO to its proposed parent, or to any other affiliated company, facilities for the production, transmission, or distribution of electric energy having a depreciated book value exceeding ten percent (10%) of PECO's consolidated net utility plant, as recorded on PECO's books of account, provided, however, this condition shall apply only for so long as PECO holds a license issued pursuant to 10 CFR Part 50.

(2) Should the proposed merger and restructuring not be completed by October 5, 2001, this Order shall become null and void, provided, however, upon written application and for good cause shown, such date may in writing be extended.

This Order is effective upon issuance.

For further details with respect to this Order, see the initial application dated July 7, 2000, and supplemental submittals dated July 13 and September 1, 2000, and the safety evaluation dated October 5, 2000, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland, and accessible electronically through the ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room link at the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov>).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 5th day of October 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[50-461]

AmerGen Energy Company, LLC; Clinton Power Station Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the NRC) is considering issuance of a license amendment to and exemptions from certain requirements of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) Part 50, Section 50.60(a) for Facility Operating License No. NPF-62, issued to AmerGen Energy Company, LLC (the licensee), for

operation of the Clinton Power Station (CPS), located in DeWitt County, Illinois.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, requires that pressure-temperature (P-T) limits be established for reactor pressure vessels (RPVs) during normal operating and hydrostatic or leak rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, states, "The appropriate requirements on both the pressure-temperature limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions." Appendix G of 10 CFR Part 50 specifies that the requirements for these limits are the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (Code), Section XI, Appendix G Limits.

The licensee requested in its submittal that the staff exempt CPS from application of specific requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Section 50.60(a) and Appendix G, and substitute use of ASME Code Cases N-588 and N-640. Code Case N-588 permits the postulation of a circumferentially-oriented flaw (in lieu of an axially-oriented flaw) for the evaluation of the circumferential welds in RPV P-T limit curves. Code Case N-640 permits the use of an alternate reference fracture toughness (K_{IC} fracture toughness curve instead of K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve) for reactor vessel materials in determining the P-T limits. Since the pressure stresses on a circumferentially-oriented flaw are lower than the pressure stresses on an axially-oriented flaw by a factor of 2, using Code Case N-588 for establishing the P-T limits would be less conservative than the methodology currently endorsed by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, and therefore, an exemption to apply the Code Case would be required by 10 CFR 50.60. Likewise, since the K_{IC} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A-2200-1 (the K_{IC} fracture toughness curve) provides greater allowable fracture toughness than the corresponding K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve of ASME Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G-2210-1 (the K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve), using Code Case N-640 for establishing the P-T limits would be less conservative than the methodology currently endorsed by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, and therefore, an exemption to apply the Code Case would also be required by 10 CFR 50.60. It should be noted that, although Code Case N-640 was incorporated into the ASME Code recently, an exemption is

still needed because the proposed P-T limits (excluding Code Cases N-588 and N-640) are based on the 1989 edition of the ASME Code.

The new P/T limits calculated by the methodologies that are subject to the exemptions, are requested to be incorporated into the CPS Technical Specifications by the associated proposed license amendment.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption and amendment dated August 25, 2000, as supplemented September 21, 2000.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The revised P/T limits are desired to allow required reactor vessel hydrostatic and leak tests to be performed at a significantly lower temperature. These tests are to be performed during the upcoming refueling outage scheduled to commence in October, 2000. The lower temperature for the tests can reduce refueling outage critical path time by reducing or eliminating the heatup time to achieve required test conditions.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has evaluated the proposed action and concludes that the exemptions and associated license amendment described above would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle failure of the CPS reactor vessel. The lower temperature, is also safer for test inspectors due to lower ambient drywell temperature and could result in lower radiological dose due to increased inspection effectiveness at the lower temperature.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, 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 non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

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:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Clinton Power Station.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on September 28, 2000, the staff consulted with the Illinois State official, Frank Niziolek, of the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the 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 letters dated August 25 and September 21, 2000. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room, located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the ADAMS Public Library component on the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov> (the Electronic Reading Room).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of October 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Jon B. Hopkins,

Senior Project Manager, Section 2 Project Directorate III, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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