



Mixed Oxide Xchange

NRC Issues Final Environmental Impact Statement

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has completed its environmental review and issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the proposed construction and operation of a Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. The FEIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed MOX fuel fabrication facility, and its alternatives including the consideration of the public comments received. The issued FEIS is part of NRC's decision making process on whether to authorize the applicant, Duke Cogema Stone & Webster, to construct and operate the proposed MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility. As a result of the environmental reviews, the NRC staff concluded that the proposed action will have small effects on the public and the environment.

Status of the Final Safety Evaluation Report

On February 10, 2005, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff gave a presentation to the members of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) full-committee. The presentation consisted of an overview of the regulatory framework for the proposed Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MFFF) Construction Authorization Request (CAR), and licensing of the proposed MFFF. In addition, the purpose of the full-committee meeting was to discuss the staff's draft Final Safety Evaluation Report (FSER), and seek the ACRS endorsement of the staff's safety evaluation of the proposed MFFF. By letter dated February 24, 2005, the ACRS recommended issuance of the FSER.

The NRC staff completed its safety evaluation of the MFFF CAR, and finalized the FSER on the proposed construction. On March 30, 2005, the NRC issued a construction authorization (CA) to the applicant, Duke Cogema Stone & Webster, for the MFFF to be located at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. The staff's safety evaluation for issuing the CA is contained in the FSER (i.e., NUREG-1821) dated March 2005.

Use of MOX Lead Test Assemblies in Catawba Nuclear Power Plant

On March 3, 2005, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff issued a license amendment and exemptions to Duke Energy Corporation (Duke) permitting the use of four mixed oxide (MOX) lead test assemblies (LTAs) in either Unit 1 or Unit 2 of the Catawba Nuclear Station, located in York County, South Carolina. The NRC conducted a safety and environmental review and concluded that the proposed use of the MOX LTAs is in compliance with NRC's safety requirements.

On March 10, 2005, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) issued a Final Partial Initial Decision on the last remaining security related issue regarding the contention made by Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. The ASLB found that Duke's requested exemptions from 10 CFR Part 11 and 73 are appropriate. Currently, the ASLB decision is not publicly available because it contains sensitive information. The ASLB plans to issue a redacted version of the decision available to the public.

MOX Construction Hearing Update

On February 2, 2005, a panel of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel dismissed a contention pertaining to seismic safety issues. The contention had been submitted by Georgians Against Nuclear Energy, the lead intervener opposing Duke Cogema Stone & Webster request to construct the proposed MOX facility.

NRC Continues to Restore On-Line Availability of Documents

On October 25, 2004, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) initiated a security review of publicly available documents to ensure that potentially sensitive information was not available through the agency Web site. As a result, the NRC temporarily suspended public access to the on-line document library, ADAMS. No classified or safeguards material is or has ever been permitted on the agency Web site. The NRC staff continues to conduct security reviews and restore access of appropriate documents. The agency has restored non-sensitive documents in several categories (e.g., reactors, selected hearings), which can be accessed directly through the NRC Web site and using Citrix software. However, links to some documents in ADAMS might not be active yet. The NRC continues its review to restore non-sensitive documents to its Web site.

For additional questions regarding the status of these security reviews, contact the Office of Public Affairs at 301-415-8200.

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Meeting Summaries

February 10, 2005

The NRC staff briefed the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards on the draft Final Safety Evaluation Report for the proposed Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility.

Upcoming Meetings

No meetings regarding the proposed Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility have been scheduled at this time.

Find meeting summaries, updates related to the proposed MFFF, frequently asked questions and past issues of the Mixed Oxide Xchange.

Go to <http://www.nrc.gov/materials/fuel-cycle-fac/mox/licensing.html>.



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