



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 16, 2024

Ms. Jean A. Fleming
Vice President, Licensing,
Regulatory Affairs, and PSA
Holtec International, LLC
Krishna P. Singh Technology Campus
1 Holtec Boulevard
Camden, NJ 08104

SUBJECT: PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT - ACCEPTANCE OF REQUESTED LICENSING
ACTION RE: LICENSE TRANSFER REQUEST (EPID L-2023-LLM-0005)

Dear Ms. Fleming:

By letter dated December 6, 2023 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML23340A161), Holtec Decommissioning International, LLC (HDI), acting on behalf of Holtec Palisades, LLC (Holtec Palisades), Palisades Energy, LLC (OPCO), and itself, submitted an application for an order approving the transfer of the license and conforming amendment regarding Palisades Nuclear Plant and its associated independent spent fuel storage facility. Specifically, HDI is requesting to transfer operational authority under Renewed Facility Operating License No. DPR-20 from HDI to OPCO as part of the regulatory approvals necessary to reauthorize power operations at Palisades. Holtec Palisades will remain the licensed owner. HDI stated that the request to transfer operational authority, in combination with a request for exemption¹ from Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), section 50.82(a)(2), and future license amendment requests (LARs)², are necessary to reauthorize power operations at Palisades Nuclear Plant. HDI further stated that the LARs are anticipated to be submitted to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) over the next several months.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the NRC staff's acceptance review of the above request. In accordance with 10 CFR, section 50.80, an application for transfer of a license shall include as much of the information as described in sections 50.33 and 50.34 of 10 CFR, with respect to the identity and technical and financial qualifications of the proposed transferee as would be required by those sections if the application were for an initial license. Also, consistent with 10 CFR 50.90, an amendment to the license must fully describe the changes requested, and follow, as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications.

The acceptance review was performed to determine if there is sufficient technical information in scope and depth to allow the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical safety review. The

¹ Exemption request submitted by letter dated September 28, 2023 (ML23271A140)

² License amendment request to revise the operating license and technical specifications to support resumption of power operations submitted by letter dated December 14, 2023 (ML23348A148)

acceptance review is also intended to identify whether the exemption request application has any readily apparent information insufficiencies in its characterization of the regulatory requirements or the licensing basis of the plant.

The NRC staff has reviewed your application and concluded that it provides technical safety information in sufficient detail to enable the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical safety review. Given the lesser scope and depth of the acceptance review, as compared to the detailed technical safety review, there may be instances in which issues that impact the NRC staff's ability to complete the detailed technical safety review are identified despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. You will be advised of any further information needed to support the NRC staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence.

With respect to the environmental review in the license transfer request, submitted by letter dated December 6, 2023, you provided information in support of your determination that a categorical exclusion in accordance with 10 CFR 51.22(c)(21), was satisfied by the license transfer request. However, because the license transfer request, the exemption request, and the future requests for license amendments are connected actions that are all necessary to reauthorize placement of fuel into the reactor vessel and reauthorize power operations at Palisades Nuclear Plant, the NRC staff will make a determination on its regulatory obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act once all associated requests have been received by the NRC.

Based on the information provided in your submittal and discussions during the pre-licensing meeting on October 3, 2023 (ML23303A213), the NRC staff has estimated that this license transfer request will require approximately 450 hours to complete the safety review. With respect to your requested completion schedule of December 31, 2024, the NRC staff believes that it will complete the safety review by then. If the NRC staff determines that the request meets applicable requirements, the issuance and effective dates would be further communicated to you and would depend on the prerequisite conditions for restart, such as receipt and review of the other aspects of the Palisades Nuclear Plant reauthorization of power operations effort, including the exemption request and license amendment requests to update the operating license, technical specifications, and emergency plan. If there are emergent complexities or challenges in our review that would cause changes to the initial forecasted completion date or significant changes in the forecasted hours, the reasons for the changes, along with the new estimates, will be provided to you via separate correspondence.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-2048 or via email at Justin.Poole@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Justin C. Poole, Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch III
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-255

cc: Listserv

SUBJECT: PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT - ACCEPTANCE OF REQUESTED LICENSING ACTION RE: LICENSE TRANSFER REQUEST (EPID L-2023-LLM-0005) DATED JANUARY 16, 2024

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