well as to identify areas of agreement or disagreement, it is not the intent of the workshop process to develop a consensus agreement of the participants on the rulemaking issues.

To have a manageable discussion, the number of participants in each workshop will be limited. The Commission, through the facilitator for the workshop, will attempt to ensure participation by the broad spectrum of interests that may be affected by the rulemaking. These interests include: Nuclear medicine physicians; physician specialists, such as cardiologists and radiologists; medical physicists; medical technologists; nurses; medical education and certification organizations; radiopharmaceutical interests; hospital administrators; patients rights advocates; Agreement States; Federal agencies; and experts in risk analysis. Other members of the public are welcome to attend, and the public will have the opportunity to comment on the rulemaking issues and the workshop discussions at periodic intervals during the workshops. Questions about participation may be directed to the facilitator, Francis X. Cameron.

To ensure that each workshop addresses the issues in a consistent manner, the workshops will have a common pre-defined scope and agenda focused primarily on the alternatives, with draft regulatory text, developed by the Part 35 Working and Steering Groups. However, the workshop format will be sufficiently flexible to allow for the introduction of additional related issues that the participants may want to raise. The workshop commentary will be transcribed and made available to the participants and the public.

Copies of the issue papers developed by the staff will be provided to the workshop participants. Also, copies will be available for members of the public in attendance at the workshops, as well as available through NRC's Public Document Room (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Attention: NRC Public Document Room, Washington, DC 20555–0001) and on the Internet via NRC's Technical Conference Forum (http://techconf.llnl.gov/noframe.html).

Public input is solicited during the development of the proposed rule but, to be most helpful, should be received by March 1, 1998. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the Commission only is able to ensure consideration of comments received on or before this date. Written input and suggestions can be sent to Secretary, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Hand-deliver comments to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays.

Dated at Rockville, Md., this 6th day of October 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Donald A. Cool,

Director, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 97–27084 Filed 10–10–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

10 CFR Part 50

RIN 3150–AE38

Acceptability of Plant Performance for Severe Accidents; Scope of Consideration in Safety Regulations

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: Withdrawal.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or Commission) is withdrawing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking that outlined alternative approaches to generic regulation addressing the challenges from severe accidents for future light water reactors. The Commission has decided that a rule change to provide generic requirements for performance during postulated severe accidents is not warranted at this time. The basis for this decision is that a purpose for the rule was to provide guidance for future designs and to facilitate then ongoing design certification rulemaking. With all current design certification rulemaking either complete or nearing completion and future applicants not foreseen, expenditure of the resources to promulgate the rule is not warranted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles E. Ader, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, telephone (301) 415–5622.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 28, 1992, (57 FR 44513), the Commission published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) to consider amending its regulations to provide generic requirements to address the challenges from severe accidents for future light water reactors. The advance notice of proposed rulemaking outlined three alternative approaches to the specification of requirements addressing severe accident performance. The first alternative, described as a hardware oriented rule, would specify reasonable design features or design characteristics directed towards prevention or mitigation of explicitly identified risk significant phenomena. The risk significant phenomena identified were: hydrogen generation, transport and combustion, high pressure melt ejection, core concrete interactions and basemat ablation, long term containment overpressurization, steam explosions from fuel-coolant interactions, and containment bypass. These phenomena represent the potential contributors to containment failure or bypass and thus the mechanisms for large offsite radioactive release. Alternative 2, described as a phenomena oriented rule, was a modification of the first alternative wherein an overall containment performance goal would be specified along with the phenomena to be considered, as identified above. The designer would then be required to perform analyses of the impact of those phenomena and develop and propose the design features to meet the goal. Regulatory guides would address analytical methods, acceptance criteria and design criteria for hardware. This approach, similar to Alternative 1, would be an overlay on the existing design basis specified in 10 CFR part 50 and justified on an enhanced safety basis. The third alternative, described as a general design criteria (GDC) oriented rule, involved development of a set of new design requirements to address specific challenges and issued as changes to Appendix A, ''General Design Criteria'' to 10 CFR part 50. Each new design criterion would describe the nature of the challenges as well as the success criterion and involve the development of Regulatory Guides to provide additional guidance on analysis methods and assumption. This approach was similar to the other alternatives, especially Alternative 2, but differs in that the existing 10 CFR part 50 design basis would be modified to include severe accidents.

A primary purpose for the generic severe accident rulemaking was to add consistency and standardization to the resolution of severe accident issues for future designs based on current technical information. While, in general, consistency among many design reviews is best achieved through generic rules, as a practical matter, since the number of new applicants is likely to remain quite limited, it is more efficient to proceed with design-specific reviews. In fact, the Commission is not aware of any new applicants in the foreseeable future.

Another purpose of the generic severe accident rulemaking, i.e., facilitation of design certification rulemaking, has been rendered moot by the experience gained in design certification rulemakings. The design certification rulemakings are completed for the General Electric Advanced Boiling Water Reactor and ABB–CE System 80+ and the only design currently under review is the Westinghouse AP600. The resolution of severe accident design specific requirements would be set forth in the AP600 design control document and approved in the AP600 design certification rulemaking.

While certain arguments in favor of generic rulemaking (i.e., promoting consistency and standardization in the resolution of severe accident issues and providing guidance to future LWR designers and applicants) continue to apply in varying degrees, practical aspects limit the need for such an activity. At this point, given the lack of any new potential plant or design applicants, the Commission believes that the benefits of generic rulemaking do not justify the allocation of resources to proceed with the development of new regulations addressing severe accidents.

Upon consideration of the potential value of a generic rule, the status of the review and design certification of future reactors, and the potential resource requirements, the Commission believes that the value in pursuing generic severe accident rulemaking does not warrant the resource expenditure. While the Commission does not perceive the need for generic rulemaking in the foreseeable future, should conditions change regarding potential applicants, the Commission would reassess the merits of rulemaking at that time.

For the reasons discussed, the Commission is withdrawing the ANPRM.

Dated at Rockville, Md. this 7th day of October, 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John C. Hoyle,

Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 97–27082 Filed 10–10–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD

12 CFR Parts 933 and 935

[No. 97–60]

RIN 3069–AA69

Eligibility for Membership and Advances

AGENCY: Federal Housing Finance Board.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Federal Housing Finance Board (Finance Board) is proposing to amend certain of its regulations relating to combination business or farm properties on which a residence is located. The amendments would eliminate the requirement that at least 50 percent of the value of such properties be attributable to the residential portion of the property (50 percent test). The amendments are intended to assist smaller depository institutions, particularly those located in rural areas, to qualify for Federal Home Loan Bank (Bank) membership and, once admitted, to provide the collateral necessary to obtain advances.

DATES: The Finance Board will accept comments on this proposed rule in writing on or before November 13, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Mail comments to Elaine L. Baker, Executive Secretary, Federal Housing Finance Board, 1777 F Street, N.W., Washington DC 20006. Comments will be available for public inspection at this address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julie Paller, Senior Financial Analyst, Office of Policy, (202) 408–2842, or Neil R. Crowley, Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, (202) 408–2990, Federal Housing Finance Board, 1777 F Street, N.W., Washington DC 20006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Statutory and Regulatory Background

Section 4(a) of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (Bank Act), 12 U.S.C. 1424(a), establishes the eligibility criteria for depository institutions to become members of the Federal Home Loan Bank System (Bank System). Section 10(a) of the Bank Act, *id.* 1430(a), authorizes a Bank to make secured advances to its members and specifies the types of collateral that a Bank may accept when originating or renewing an advance. With respect to both membership criteria and eligible collateral, the regulations of the Finance Board permit the use of loans that are secured by business or farm properties on which there is a residence, but only if the value of the residential portion equals or exceeds 50 percent of the value of the entire parcel. The Finance Board is concerned that those regulations may be overly restrictive and therefore is proposing to amend them, as described below.

A. Membership

Section 4(a)(2) of the Bank Act requires, in part, that an insured depository institution have ''at least 10 percent of its total assets in residential mortgage loans'' in order to be eligible for membership. *Id.* 1424(a)(2). The Finance Board has defined ''residential mortgage loan'' to include, among other things, a ''home mortgage loan.'' 12 CFR 933.1(bb). The Finance Board has defined ''home mortgage loan'' to include, in part, a loan secured by a first lien on ''combination business or farm property where at least 50 percent of the total appraised value of the combined property is attributable to the residential portion of the property.'' *Id.* § 933.1(n)(1)(iii). The term ''combination business or farm property'' means real property for which the value is attributable to residential, and business or farm uses. *Id.* § 933.1(i).

B. Collateral for Advances

Section 10(a)(1) of the Bank Act requires a Bank making or renewing an advance to its members to maintain a security interest in certain specified types of collateral, among which are ''first mortgages on improved residential property.'' 12 U.S.C. 1430(a)(1). The Finance Board has defined ''improved residential real property'' to mean ''residential real property excluding real property to be improved, or in the process of being improved, by the construction of dwelling units.'' 12 CFR 935.1. The Finance Board has defined ''residential real property'' to include, among other things, ''combination business or farm property, provided that at least 50 percent of the total appraised value of the combined property is attributable to the residential portion of the property.'' *Id.* The term ''combination business or farm property'' means ''real property for which the total appraised value is attributable to the combination of residential, and business or farm uses.'' *Id.*

II. Analysis of the Proposed Rule

The Finance Board believes that community depository institutions, particularly those located in rural areas, often are essential to the housing finance activities and the broader economic well-being of the communities they serve. Such institutions may have less demand for conventional single and multi-family mortgage credit and their service areas may be characterized by low population density and a low level of economic activity. In such circumstances, those institutions may not be able to originate a substantial number of residential first mortgage loans. Moreover, many loans originated by rural banks may be made on the security of family farms, which