Unit No. 2 (BVPS–2), located in Shippingport, PA.

The withdrawn portion of the proposed amendment would have revised the BVPS–2 Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) description of the small-break loss-of-coolant accident (SBLOCA) radiological dose consequences. The licensee completed an analysis which demonstrated that the SBLOCA results are bounded by the results of the large-break loss-of-coolant accident analysis. Therefore, the requested UFSAR changes pertaining to the SBLOCA are not needed, and these requested changes are being withdrawn.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on March 11, 1998 (63 FR 11919). However, by letter dated June 14, 1999, the licensee withdrew this portion of the proposed change as discussed above.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated January 29, 1998, as supplemented November 9, 1998, and the licensee's letter dated June 14, 1999, which withdrew a portion of the application for license amendment. The above documents are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room and 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, MD, this 18th day of November 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Daniel S. Collins,

Project Manager, Section 1, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99–30643 Filed 11–23–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Revised Criteria for Post Accident Sampling Systems

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering modifying its criteria for post accident sampling systems (PASS). The NRC has received two industry-developed topical reports which provide justification for removal of PASS from the licensing basis for nuclear power plants designed by Westinghouse and Combustion Engineering. The NRC generally agrees with the conclusions in these reports and is considering approving these reports. If the NRC approves these reports, nuclear power plant licensees will be able to reference the reports to support changes to their PASS, including the elimination of the system. The NRC is requesting public comment on this pending action. In particular, the NRC is seeking comment on whether the elimination of information obtained from radionuclide sampling from PASS may affect offsite emergency response organizations ability to respond to an accident.

DATES: The comment period expires January 10, 2000. Comments received from after this date will be considered if it practical to do so, but the Commission is able to ensure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to: David L. Meyer, Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555–0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjucations Staff.

Deliver comments to: 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays.

The publications cited in this document, including the industry-developed topical reports, are available for inspection and copying, for a fee, through the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, Lower Level, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James O'Brien, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC. 20555–0001, telephone (301) 415–2919; e-mail jbo@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background
II. Description of Proposed Action
III. Evaluation of Proposed Action
IV. Request for Comment

I. Background

Following the accident at Three Mile Island Unit 2 (TMI–2) on March 28, 1979, the NRC formed a lessons-learned Task Force to identify and evaluate safety concerns originating with the TMI–2 accident. NUREG–0578, ''TMI–2 Lessons Learned Task Force Status report and Short-term Recommendations,'' documents the results of the task force effort. One of the recommendations of the task force was for licensees to upgrade the capability to obtain samples from the reactor coolant system and containment atmosphere under high radioactivity conditions and to provide the capability for chemical and spectral analyses of high-level samples on site. NUREG–0737, ''Clarification of TMI Action Plan Requirements,'' which was issued to licenses in Generic Letter 80–90 on October 31, 1980, contains the details of the TMI recommendations that were to be implemented by the licensees. Additional criteria for post accident sampling systems were issued by Regulatory Guide 1.97, ''Instrumentation for Light-water-cooled Nuclear Power Plants to Assess Plant and Environs Conditions During and Following an Accident.''

Specific criteria for PASS capability delineated in NUREG–0737 and Regulatory Guide 1.97 are:

Sample location	Measurement
1. Reactor Coolant	Dissolved gases, Boron, Chlorides, pH, Radionuclides
2. Containment Atmosphere	Hydrogen, Oxygen, Radionuclides
3. Containment Sump	Boron, Chlorides, pH, Radionuclides

All samples and measurements were to be taken and analyzed within 3 hours of the decision to do so except for chlorides which were to be taken and analyzed within 24 hours.

In the mid 1980's, the NRC sponsored an assessment of selected regulatory requirements that may have marginal importance to risk. One of the issues reviewed was the PASS criteria. This assessment, documented in NUREG/CR–4330, concluded that the PASS had marginal benefits, but that the cost of maintaining the PASS was minimal.

On October 26, 1998, the Westinghouse Owners Group submitted a topical report, WCAP–14986–P which provided justification for elimination of the PASS from the licensing basis. By eliminating PASS from the licensing basis, there would no longer be a licensee commitment to maintain the system. On May 5, 1999, the Combustion Engineering Owners Group

submitted a related topical report, CE NPSD–1157, which also provided justification for elimination of PASS. Both of these topical reports indicated that the cost of maintaining the PASS was high and justified elimination of PASS based upon there being no benefit in the information obtained via PASS. The topical reports conclude that the sampling systems are not useful in supporting post accident mitigative and emergency response actions and that most of the information, which would be obtained from sampling, can be inferred from other indications which will be available earlier in an event that the sample results. In addition, the topical reports state that the samples are subject to inaccuracies due to physical phenomena (e.g., deposition of fission products in sample lines) involved in taking the samples.

II. Description of Proposed Action

The NRC is proposing to endorse the industry topical reports for referencing in site-specific licensing actions to remove commitments for maintaining PASS. This action, if taken, would allow nuclear power plants to remove their commitments for maintaining PASS.

III. Justification for Proposed Action

The NRC concludes from its review of the topical reports that the information to be obtained from PASS can be inferred to a large degree from other indications which will be available earlier in an event than the PASS samples due to the time needed to obtain and analyze the PASS sample. In addition, the PASS samples are difficult to obtain and are subject to inaccuracies due to physical phenomena (e.g., deposition of fission products in sample lines) involved in taking the samples. However, PASS can provide a measurement of radionuclides in reactor coolant system, containment sump and containment atmosphere which may be used in supporting emergency response decision making. This information may be used to modify the assumed source term used in offsite dose calculations which are considered in formulating Protective Action Recommendations (PARs) during an accident. This information is not needed to formulate initial PARs (which are most likely based on plant conditions, e.g., reactor water level, core temperatures, and containment radiation levels). Furthermore, other information, such as area, process, and effluent radiation monitor readings and field team data, can be used to support modification to the initial PAR. The PASS information would potentially be most useful in situations where an accident results in release of radioactive material to the reactor coolant or containment, but a breach of either of these systems/volumes does not occur within the first several hours of the accident or occurs through an unmonitored release path. However, even in these situations, PASS sample measurement information would not be a real-time indication of the concentration of radionuclides within the sampled volume (due to the time needed to analyze the samples) and would be subject to the inaccuracies discussed above.

IV. Request for Comment

Before completing its review of the industry topical reports, the NRC is seeking public comment from its stockholders. In particular, the NRC is seeking comment from offsite emergency response organizations who may have an interest in information regarding radionuclide concentrations in the reactor coolant, containment sump or containment atmosphere to support their emergency response activities (in particular protective action decision making). Specifically, the NRC is seeking comment on whether elimination of information obtained from radionuclide sampling using the PASS may have an adverse effect on offsite emergency response organizations' ability to respond to an accident in view of (1) the availability of information provided by plant conditions, plant radiation monitor readings and field monitoring teams and (2) the limitations associated with the accuracy and timeliness of information provided by the PASS.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18 day of November, 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Frank P. Gillespie,

Deputy Director, Division of Inspection Program Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc 99–30645 Filed 11–23–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Licenses Authorizing Distribution to General Licensees

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

ACTION: Notice of Availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The NRC is announcing the availability of, and requesting comments on, draft NUREG–1556, Volume 16, ''Consolidated Guidance about Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance about Licenses Authorizing Distribution to General Licensees,'' dated September 1999. This draft NUREG report is the 16th program-specific guidance document developed to support an improved material licensing process. The NRC is using Business Process Redesign techniques to redesign its material licensing process, as described in NUREG–1539, ''Methodology and Findings of the NRC's Materials Licensing Process Redesign.'' A critical element of the new process is consolidating and updating numerous guidance documents into a NUREG-series of reports.

This draft guide has been developed in parallel with the proposed rulemaking on 10 CFR Parts 30, 31, 32, 170, and 171, ''Requirements for Certain Generally Licensed Industrial Devices Containing Byproduct Material.'' The proposed rule was published in the **Federal Register** on July 26, 1999 (64 FR 40295). Comments received in response to publication of this draft guidance will be considered in developing the final guide. Finalization of the guidance will continue to parallel the rulemaking, resulting in a guidance document that is consistent with the final rule. It is intended for use by applicants, licensees, NRC license reviewers, and other NRC personnel.

NRC is requesting comments such as whether a risk-informed, performance-based approach to licensing is valid, as well as comments on the information provided. Note that this document is strictly for public comment and is not for use in preparing or reviewing applications, until it is published in final form.

DATES: The comment period ends January 24, 2000. Comments received after that time will be considered if practicable.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to: Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001. Hand-deliver comments to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Federal workdays. Comments may also be submitted through the Internet by addressing electronic mail to dlm1@nrc.gov.

Those considering public comment may request a free single copy of draft NUREG–1556, Volume 16, by writing to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Mrs. Sally L. Merchant, Mail Stop TWFN 9–F–31, Washington, DC 20555–0001.