

implementation of the security plan at the site.

IV

For the foregoing reasons, pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, the NRC staff has determined that the proposed alternative measures for protection against radiological sabotage meet "the same high assurance objective," and "the general performance requirements" of the regulation and that "the overall level of system performance provides protection against radiological sabotage equivalent" to that which would be provided by the regulation.

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 73.5, an exemption is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property or common defense and security, and is otherwise in the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants Duquesne Light Company, et al. an exemption from those requirements of 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) relating to the returning of picture badges/keycards upon exit from the protected area such that individuals not employed by the licensee, i.e., contractors, who are authorized unescorted access into the protected area, can take their badges/keycards offsite.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (60 FR 27922). This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of July 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,
Steven A. Varga,
*Director, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*
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[Docket No. 50–397]

Exemption

In the matter of Washington Public Power Supply System; (WPPSS Nuclear Project No. 2).

I

On December 20, 1983, the Commission issued Facility Operating License No. NPF–21 to Washington Public Power Supply System (the licensee) for the WPPSS Nuclear Project No. 2. The license provides, among other things, that the licensee is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the Commission now or hereafter in effect.

II

It is stated in 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power reactors against radiological sabotage," paragraph (a), that "the licensee shall establish and maintain an onsite physical protection system and security organization which will have as its objective to provide high assurance that activities involving special nuclear material are not inimical to the common defense and security and do not constitute an unreasonable risk to the public health and safety."

It is specified in 10 CFR 73.55(d), "Access Requirements," paragraph (1), that "the licensee shall control all points of personnel and vehicle access into a protected area." Section 73.55(d)(5) requires that "a numbered picture badge identification system shall be used for all individuals who are authorized access to protected areas without escort." Section 73.55(d)(5) also states that an individual not employed by the licensee (e.g., contractors) may be authorized access to protected areas without escort provided the individual "receives a picture badge upon entrance into the protected area which must be returned upon exit from the protected area."

The licensee proposed to implement an alternative unescorted access control system which would eliminate the need to issue and retrieve badges at the entrance/exit location and would allow all individuals with unescorted access to keep their badge with them when departing the site.

An exemption from 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) is required to allow personnel not employed by the licensee who have unescorted access to take their badges offsite instead of returning them when exiting the site. By letter dated March 1, 1995, the licensee requested an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5) for this purpose.

III

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.5, "Specific exemptions," the Commission may, upon application of any interested person or upon its own initiative, grant such exemptions in this part as it determines are authorized by law and will not endanger life or property or the common defense and security, and are otherwise in the public interest.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 73.55, the Commission may authorize a licensee to provide alternative measures for protection against radiological sabotage provided the licensee demonstrates that the alternative measures have "the same

high assurance objective" and meet "the general performance requirements" of the regulation, and "the overall level of system performance provides protection against radiological sabotage equivalent" to that which would be provided by the regulation.

Currently, unescorted access to the protected area of WNP–2 is controlled through the use of a photograph on a badge with a keycard attached (hereafter, these are referred to as "the badge"). The security officers at the entrance station use the photograph on the badge to visually identify the individual requesting access. The individual is then given the badge to allow access. The badges for both licensee employees and contractor personnel who have been granted unescorted access are issued upon entrance at the access point. Another security officer in the same control area collects the badges upon exit from the protected area. The badges are then placed in a badge rack located at the badge issue station and stored at the entrance until the individual again needs access into the protected area. In accordance with 10 CFR 73.55(d)(5), individuals not employed by the licensee (e.g., contractors) are not allowed to take badges offsite.

Under the proposed system, each individual who is authorized for unescorted entry into the protected area would have the physical characteristics of their hand (hand geometry) registered with their badge number in the access control computer. Access is then initiated by the individual requesting access by placing their badge up to the card reader and their hand on a measuring surface. The computer then compares the hand geometry to that registered for the badge number. If the characteristics of the hand geometry stored in the computer match the badge number, access is granted. If the characteristics of the hand geometry do not match the badge number, access is denied. This provides a non-transferable means of identifying that the individual processing the badge is the individual who was granted unescorted access. This method also provides a positive means of assuring that a stolen or lost badge could not be used to gain access, thus eliminating the need to issue and retrieve the badges while maintaining the same high level of assurance that access is granted to only authorized individuals. All other access processes, including search function capability, would remain the same. The system will not be used for visitors requiring escorted access. The access process will continue to be under the observation of security personnel located within the