

Vermont Yankee; ORAL COMMENTS TO BE ACCEPTED IN BRATTLEBORO, VT., ON OCT. 11

Contributed by Michael Mariotte
Tuesday, 02 October 2007

REGARDING PROCEEDING ON VERMONT YANKEE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Interested citizens will have an opportunity on Thursday, Oct. 11, to comment on issues pending in an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) proceeding regarding the license renewal application for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, located in Vernon, Vt. The remarks, which will be transcribed, will be heard by the three administrative judges handling the Vermont Yankee adjudicatory proceeding.

Known as "limited appearance statements," the comments will be accepted during two sessions to be held at the Latchis Theatre, at 50 Main St. in Brattleboro. (Directions are available on the theatre's web site at: <http://www.latchis.com/location.html> .) The first session is scheduled for 1 to 4 p.m. and the second from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

The Board, in an order scheduling the sessions, stated that the purpose of seeking the limited appearance statements is to allow members of the public to alert it and the parties involved to areas relating to admitted contentions on the plant's license renewal application in which evidence may need to be acquired, "and to assist the Board in its consideration of these issues."

Persons wishing to make an oral statement are encouraged to submit a written request to the Board as soon as possible. Individuals who have submitted a timely request and who are present when their names are called will be given priority over those who have not filed such a request. To be considered timely, a written request to make an oral statement must be mailed, faxed or sent by e-mail so as to be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 5. The request must specify the requestor's name and the session (afternoon or evening) during which he or she wishes to make an oral statement. Written requests should be mailed to: Office of the Secretary, Rulemakings and Adjudication Staff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001; faxed to: (301) 415-1101; or e-mailed to: hearingdocket@nrc.gov . Copies of requests should be mailed to: Alex Karlin, Chairman, c/o: Marcia Carpentier, Esq., Law Clerk, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, Mail Stop T-3 E2C, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001; faxed to: 301-415-5599; or e-mailed to: mxc7@nrc.gov and ksv@nrc.gov .

In January 2006, Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., which owns and operates Vermont Yankee, applied to the NRC for a 20-year license extension for the plant. The current operating license for the plant is due to expire on March 21, 2012. Subsequently, four requests for a hearing on the application were submitted to the NRC. The requests were filed by the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS), the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Marlboro, Vt., and the New England Coalition (NEC). In an order issued on Sept. 22, 2006, the Board admitted contentions submitted by the DPS and NEC, thereby making both a party to the proceeding. The ASLB panel also granted those organizations' requests to adopt one another's contentions. On Nov. 17, 2006, the Board granted a request by the State of Hampshire to participate in the proceeding as an interested state. The sole DPS contention admitted has now been settled, but DPS remains a party to the proceeding since it adopted NEC's contentions.

Currently, NEC has three contentions still under consideration. Interested members of the public are asked to focus their Oct. 11th limited appearance statements on the three contentions, which are the only matters currently within the Board's jurisdiction. The contentions are as follows:

NEC Contention 2: Entergy's license renewal application does not include an adequate plan to monitor and manage the effects of aging (due to metal fatigue) on key reactor components that are subject to an aging management review, pursuant to 10CFR.54.21(a), and an evaluation of time-limited aging analysis, pursuant to 10CFR.54.21(c).

NEC Contention 3: Entergy's license renewal application does not include an adequate plan to monitor and manage aging of the steam dryer during the period of extended operation.

NEC Contention 4: Entergy's license renewal application does not include an adequate plan to monitor and manage aging of plant piping due to flow-accelerated corrosion during the period of extended operation.

Additional information about the Vermont Yankee application review is available at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/vermont-yankee.html> .