UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  

BEFORE THE ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD  

In the Matter of  

AMERGEN ENERGY COMPANY, LLC )  

Docket No. 50-219-LR  

(Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station) )

NRC STAFF ANSWER TO AMERGEN’S MOTION TO STRIKE PORTIONS OF CITIZENS’ PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW  

INTRODUCTION  

Pursuant to 10 C.F.R. §§ 2.1204 and 2.323, the Staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (“Staff”) hereby answers AmerGen’s “Motion to Strike Portions of Citizens’ Findings of Fact” (Oct. 22, 2007) (“Motion”). For the reasons set for below, the Staff agrees with AmerGen’s objections to Citizens’ proposed findings but does not think that AmerGen’s motion is necessary.  

DISCUSSION  

In order to preserve its objections for any appeal, AmerGen moves to strike identified portions of “Citizens’ Post-Hearing Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law” (Oct. 10, 2007) (“Citizens’ Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law”) because those portions contain facts and analysis that are not part of the evidentiary record, as well as arguments that exceed the scope of the proceeding. See Motion at 1.  

The Staff agrees with AmerGen that the record in this proceeding was closed on September 25, 2007, subject only to motions for transcript corrections, See Transcript of AmerGen Energy Company Oyster Creek Evidentiary Hearing at 603, and that presentation of
new facts, exhibits, and arguments for the first time in post-hearing findings deprives interested parties of an opportunity to respond. See Union Electric Co., (Callaway Plant, Unit 1), ALBA-740, 18 NRC 343, 349-50 (rejecting new arguments made in findings as depriving interested parties of a meaningful opportunity to respond to crucial facts); Inquiry into Three Mile Island Unit 2 Leak Rate Data Falsification, LBP-87-14, 25 NRC 671, 687-88 (1987) (refusing to consider materials attached to proposed findings which had not been offered (or attempted to be offered) before the hearing record was closed). NRC proceedings must provide both an opportunity to submit evidence and to challenge evidence as to any and all material facts. See Union of Concerned Scientists v. NRC, 735 F.2d 1437, 1444-45 (D.C. Cir. 1984).

The Staff also agrees with AmerGen that, although 10 C.F.R. Subpart L contains its own provision for findings of fact and conclusions of law (10 C.F.R. § 2.1209), proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law in Subpart L proceedings should conform with the requirements of 10 C.F.R. § 2.712(c) in Subpart G, i.e., “proposed findings of fact must be confined to the material issues of fact presented on the record, with exact citations to the transcript of record and exhibits in support of each proposed finding,” particularly because § 2.1209, in contrast to § 2.712(c), does not authorize reply findings. To allow otherwise in a Subpart L proceeding would be contrary to case law and the Administrative Procedure Act. See LBP-87-14, 25 NRC at 687-88; 5 U.S.C. § 556(e).

Although the Staff agrees that Citizens’ Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law impermissibly contain new facts, exhibits, and arguments that are not already part of the record, the Staff is confident that, in accordance with Commission case law, the Board’s initial decision will be based solely on factual material that has been introduced and admitted into evidence and that its findings will be supported by probative and substantial evidence on the
record. See Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 2), ALAB-254, 8 AEC 1184, 1187 (1975). For the Board to do otherwise would be in error. See Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Units 1 & 2), ALAB-580, 11 NRC 227, 230-31 (vacating a licensing board decision that was not supported by evidence in the record).

In addition, the Staff is confident that the Board is aware of both AmerGens’ and the Staff’s objections to Citizens’ arguments regarding continuous UT thickness monitoring and derivation of AmerGen’s wall thickness acceptance criteria as beyond the scope of this proceeding, see e.g., Memorandum and Order (Ruling on Motions in Limine and Motion for Clarification) (Aug. 9, 2007) at 5-7, and that the Board’s decision will not address issues beyond the scope of the admitted contention.

1 The Board may, however, apply known engineering principles to and make mathematical calculations from facts in the record whether or not any witness purported to attempt this exercise. Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. (Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station), ALAB-229, 8 AEC 425, 437, rev. on other gnds., CLI-74-40, 8 AEC 809(1974). If the Board applies engineering principles or performs calculations, it must adequately explain the basis for its conclusions. Public Service Co. of New Hampshire (Seabrook Station, Units 1 & 2), ALAB-422, 6 NRC 33, 66 (1977).
CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, the Staff agrees with AmerGen’s objections to Citizens’ Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of law, but submits that AmerGen’s motion is unnecessary.

/RA/

Mary C. Baty
Counsel for NRC Staff

Dated at Rockville, Maryland
this 31st day of October, 2007
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

BEFORE THE ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD

In the Matter of

AmerGen Energy Company, LLC Docket No. 50-219-LR

(Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station)

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

Notice is hereby given that, effective October 31, 2007, the undersigned counsel withdraws her appearance in the captioned proceeding. All mail and service lists in this proceeding should be amended appropriately.

Respectfully submitted,

/R A /

Mitzi A. Young
Counsel for NRC Staff
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Mail Stop O-15 D-21
Washington, DC 20555-0001
(301) 415-1523
may@nrc.gov

Dated at Rockville, Maryland
this 31st day of October, 2007
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  

BEFORE THE ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD  

In the Matter of  

AMERGEN ENERGY COMPANY, LLC  

(Docket No. 50-219-LR)  

(Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station)  

NOTICE OF APPEARANCE  

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned attorney herewith enters an appearance in the captioned matter in accordance with 10 C.F.R. § 2.314(b).  

Name: Kimberly A. Sexton  
Address: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Office of the General Counsel  
Mail Stop: O-15-D21  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001  
Telephone Number: (301) 415-1151  
Fax Number: (301) 415-3725  
E-Mail address: KAS2@nrc.gov  
Admissions: Florida  
Name of Party: NRC Staff  

Respectfully submitted,  

/RA/  
Kimberly A. Sexton  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  

Dated at Rockville, Maryland  
this 31st day of October, 2007
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
BEFORE THE ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD

In the Matter of )
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AMERGEN ENERGY COMPANY, LLC ) Docket No. 50-219-LR )
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the “NRC STAFF ANSWER TO AMERGEN’S MOTION TO STRIKE PORTIONS OF CITIZENS’ PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW,” “NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL” of Mitzi A. Young, and “NOTICE OF APPEARANCE” of Kimberly A. Sexton, in the above-captioned proceeding have been served on the following by electronic mail with copies by deposit in the NRC’s internal mail system or as indicated by an asterisk, by electronic mail, with copies by U.S mail, first class, this 31st day of October, 2007.

E. Roy Hawkens, Chair
Administrative Judge
 Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
 Mail Stop: T-3F23
 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, DC 20555-0001
 ERH@nrc.gov

Anthony J. Baratta
Administrative Judge
 Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
 Mail Stop: T-3F23
 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, DC 20555-0001
 AJB5@nrc.gov

Paul B. Abramson
Administrative Judge
 Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel
 Mail Stop: T-3F23
 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, DC 20555-0001
 PBA@nrc.gov

Office of the Secretary*
ATTN: Docketing and Service
Mail Stop: O-16G4
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001
HEARINGDOCKET@nrc.gov

Office of Commission Appellate
Adjudication
Mail Stop O-16G4
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001
OCAAmail@nrc.gov

Debra Wolf
Law Clerk
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel
Mail Stop: T-3F23
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001
DAW1@nrc.gov
Suzanne Leta Liou  
NJ Public Interest Research Group  
11 N. Willow St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
sliou@environmentnewjersey.org

Richard Webster, Esq.*  
Julia LeMense, Esq.*  
Rutgers Environmental Law Clinic  
123 Washington Street  
Newark, NJ 07102-5695  
rwebster@kinoy.rutgers.edu  
jhuff@kinoy.rutgers.edu

Donald Silverman, Esq.*  
Alex S. Polonsky, Esq.*  
Kathryn M. Sutton, Esq.*  
Ray Kuyler, Esq.*  
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP  
1111 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004  
dsilverman@morganlewis.com  
apolonsky@morganlewis.com  
ksutton@morganlewis.com  
rkuyler@morganlewis.com

J. Bradley Fewell, Esq.*  
Exelon Corporation  
4300 Warrenville Road  
Warrenville, IL 60555  
bradley.fewell@exeloncorp.com

Paul Gunter, Esq.*  
Keven Kamps*  
Nuclear Watchdog Project & Nuclear Information and Resource Service  
6930 Carroll Ave., Suite 340  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
paul@beyondnuclear.org  
kevin@beyondnuclear.org

/RA/

Mary C. Baty  
Counsel for the NRC Staff