



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 11, 2021

Dr. Partha Chowdhury, Director
Nuclear Radiation Laboratory
University of Massachusetts-Lowell
One University Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL – STATUS OF THE
REGULATORY AUDIT AND UPDATE REGARDING THE RENEWAL OF
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. R-125 (EPID NOS. L-2015-RNW-0001,
L-2020-NFR-0008)

Dear Dr. Chowdhury:

The University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) holds U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Facility Operating License No. R-125 for the operation of the UML Research Reactor (UMLRR). By application dated October 20, 2015 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML16042A015), as supplemented, UML applied for renewal of the UMLRR operating license.

By letter dated February 4, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20021A315), the NRC staff informed UML that it would conduct a regulatory audit beginning February 10, 2020, and continuing as necessary, and provided UML with an audit plan. By letter dated September 1, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20240A043), the NRC staff stated that based on UML submitting information addressing information needs identified during the audit by September 30, 2020, the NRC staff expected to complete its review and make a final determination on the renewal request by January 31, 2021.

During a teleconference on December 16, 2020, as documented in the NRC staff's interim audit report dated December 17, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20303A305), the NRC staff held an interim exit briefing with UML to discuss activities performed during the audit up to that date, and to discuss follow-up audit questions related to the supplemental information UML had provided by letter dated September 30, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20274A248). The NRC staff and UML agreed that the audit would continue by teleconference, as necessary, to address the follow-up audit questions (or other items, if necessary). UML stated it would provide further supplemental information, as necessary, on the docket to address information needs identified by the NRC staff. UML stated that following any necessary additional discussion of the resolution of the audit questions, it would provide the NRC staff with an estimated date for submission of any further supplemental information required for the NRC staff to complete its review. The NRC staff stated that, based on this submission date, it would provide an updated date by which it expected to complete its review and make a final determination on the license renewal application.

By letter dated January 5, 2021 (ADAMS Accession No. ML21005A23), UML stated that it expected to submit the additional information related to the audit by January 31, 2021. The NRC staff plans to continue to keep the audit open at this time, to facilitate discussion of any questions that may arise as UML continues to prepare its supplemental information for submittal. As discussed in the NRC staff's letters dated February 4, and December 17, 2020, the NRC staff will issue a final regulatory audit report following the completion of the audit.

Based on UML submitting the information discussed above by January 31, 2021, the NRC staff is providing a revised date of May 31, 2021, by which it expects to complete its review and make a final determination on the renewal request. However, this date could still change due to several factors including a need for further requests for additional information, unanticipated changes to the scope of the review, unsolicited supplements to the application for the renewal, and others. If the forecasted date changes, the NRC staff will notify you in writing of the new date and an explanation of the reason for the change.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-4067, or by electronic mail at Edward.Helvenston@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,



Signed by Helvenston, Edward
on 01/11/21

Edward M. Helvenston, Project Manager
Non-Power Production and Utilization
Facility Licensing Branch
Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-Power
Production and Utilization Facilities
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-223

License No. R-125

cc: See next page

University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Docket No. 50-223

cc:

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Lowell, MA 01852

Mr. Leo Bobek
Reactor Supervisor
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Jack Priest, Director
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Ms. Samantha Phillips, Director
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Test, Research and Training
Reactor Newsletter
Attention: Ms. Amber Johnson
Department of Materials Science
and Engineering
University of Maryland
4418 Stadium Drive
College Park, MD 20742-2115

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NRR-106

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