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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 70-3103; CEQ ID EAXX-429-00-000-1775693431; NRC-2026-1156]

Louisiana Energy Services, LLC, dba Urenco USA;

National Enrichment Facility;

Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice; issuance.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for an exemption request submitted by Louisiana Energy Services, LLC (LES) also doing business as (dba) Urenco USA (UUSA), that would allow UUSA, a general licensee (GL) and certificate of compliance (CoC) user, to use a vendor's transportation package design (CoC No. 9362) for transport of certain limited shipments of uranium hexafluoride (UF_6) up to 10 weight (wt.) percent enrichment of uranium-235 (U-235), a higher enrichment than authorized in CoC No. 9362, Revision No. 5.

DATES: The EA and FONSI referenced in this document are available on **[INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]**.

ADDRESSES: Please refer to Docket ID NRC-2026-1156 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information regarding this document. You may obtain publicly available information related to this document using any of the following methods:

- **Federal Rulemaking Website:** Go to https://www.regulations.gov and search for Docket ID NRC-2026-1156. Address questions about Docket IDs in Regulations.gov to Bridget Curran; telephone: 301-415-1003; email:

Bridget.Curran@nrc.gov. For technical questions, contact the individual(s) listed in the "For Further Information Contact" section of this document.

- **NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):** You may obtain publicly available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html. To begin the search, select "Begin ADAMS Public Search." For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, at 301-415-4737, or by email to PDR.Resource@nrc.gov. For the convenience of the reader, instructions about obtaining materials referenced in this document are provided in the "Availability of Documents" section.
- **NRC's PDR:** The PDR, where you may examine and order copies of publicly available documents, is open by appointment. To make an appointment to visit the PDR, please send an email to PDR.Resource@nrc.gov or call 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. eastern time (ET), Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Daneira Meléndez Colón, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; telephone: 301-415-7295; email: Daneira.Melendez-Colon@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

The NRC is reviewing an exemption request from LES, also dba UUSA, dated October 8, 2025, and supplemented on December 16, 2025, and February 4, 2026. Urenco USA is requesting an exemption, pursuant to section 71.12 of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), of paragraphs 71.17(c)(2) and 71.17(c)(3), that require UUSA to comply with the terms and conditions of CoC No. 9362 and submit in

writing before the first use of the package. If approved, the exemption would allow UUSA to use 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages (i.e., CoC No. 9362) for domestic transport of UF_6 enriched to greater than 5 but less than 10 wt. percent U-235. Currently, CoC No. 9362, Revision No. 5, allows for transport of UF_6 with U-235 mass percentage not to exceed 5 wt. percent.

II. Environmental Assessment

Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would authorize UUSA, a general licensee and CoC user, to use 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages (i.e., transportation package system) for domestic transport of certain limited shipments of UF_6 at an enrichment of greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235. Urenco USA is currently a registered user of the DN30 transportation package. At this time the CoC for the DN30 transportation package contents is limited to 5 wt. percent U-235 (CoC No. 9362, Revision No. 5). No physical or design changes to the DN30 transportation package are proposed in this exemption. The proposed exemption would be limited to using approximately 40 to 50 cylinders in 2026-2027 for shipment of UF_6 to a single customer.

The CoC is the NRC approved design for each transportation package system. The proposed action would exempt the applicant from the requirements of 10 CFR 71.17(c)(2) and 71.17(c)(3) only as these requirements pertain to the use of the 30B cylinder within the DN30 transportation package. The exemption would allow UUSA to use the DN30 transportation package with this content, despite not being in compliance with the terms and conditions in CoC No. 9362.

The proposed action is in accordance with UUSA exemption request dated October 8, 2025, as supplemented by letters dated December 16, 2025, and February 4, 2026.

Need for the Proposed Action

The nuclear industry is currently pursuing fuels with slightly increased enrichments for reactors in order to support industry initiatives, such as accident tolerant fuels and extended fuel cycle fuel. Urenco USA and other nuclear facilities are pursuing advancements in fuel and enrichment in concert with reactor designs that utilize high-essay low-enriched uranium (HALEU); that is, fuels with enrichments greater than 5 but less than 20 wt. percent U-235, to support these initiatives.

Although UUSA's license (SNM-2010) permits enrichment of UF_6 up to less than 10 wt. percent U-235, the material must still be packaged for transport to the fuel fabricators and reactor operators. Currently, there is only one approved UF_6 transportation package for commercial HALEU quantities - the Orano NCS GmbH Model No. DN30-X (CoC No. 9388). The DN30-X transportation package consists of the DN30 packaging and the 30B-X UF_6 cylinder. The "X" in DN30-X and 30B-X is either replaced by "10" or by "20" to refer to a specific design for a maximum enrichment of 10 or 20 percent by weight U-235, respectively. Urenco USA has supported testing of the prototypes and ordered 30B-10 cylinders, but manufacturing of this approved transportation package has not yet occurred. With ANSI (American National Standards Institute) N14.1 standard updates and facility implementation still pending, UUSA is not certain when the new transportation package approved for HALEU fuel contents will be available. Given that UUSA has contracted HALEU orders that will need shipping, this has created a business risk. To address this risk, in the meantime, while awaiting the manufacturing of the newly approved transportation package (i.e., DN30-X) that will allow up to 10 wt. percent U-235, UUSA requested regulatory approval to use 30B cylinders within the DN30 transportation package for domestic HALEU delivery, limited to use approximately 40 to 50 cylinders in 2026–2027 for shipment to a single customer.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

This EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts of granting an exemption from certain terms and conditions in CoC No. 9362. The exemption would allow UUSA to use 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages for domestic transport of UF_6 enriched to greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235. This exemption would be limited to using approximately 40 to 50 cylinders in 2026-2027 to deliver UF_6 to a single customer.

The potential environmental impacts of transporting radioactive material pursuant to 10 CFR part 71 was initially published in 1977 as NUREG-0170, “Final Environmental Statement on the Transportation of Radioactive Material by Air and Other Modes” for the Proposed Rule to amend 10 CFR part 71. The Commission concluded that impacts from the transportation of radioactive material are small. As such, a categorical exclusion for transportation package approvals is given in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(13), “Approval of package designs for packages to be used for the transportation of licensed materials.” The categorical exclusion provided in NRC’s environmental regulations, however, is specific to package approvals and does not apply to requests for exemption from those approvals. Therefore, the NRC has prepared an environmental assessment in support of the exemption request and, in doing so, is tiering off this “Final Environmental Statement.”

Certificates of compliance approving package designs for packages to be used in the transportation of radioactive materials are issued upon demonstration that the package designs meet applicable performance standards contained in part 71 of the Commission’s regulations.

NUREG-0170 determined that the principal unavoidable environmental effect of transport of radioactive material was found to be population exposure resulting from normal transport of radioactive materials. As part of the review of this exemption request,

the NRC staff concluded by evaluation of dose rate calculations submitted with the application that any radiation exposure from the transport of UF_6, enriched to greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235, utilizing 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages to the public or workers will not exceed regulatory limits under normal or hypothetical accident conditions during shipment. Any radiological or non-radiological environmental impacts of transporting UF_6, enriched to greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235, utilizing 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages would be no greater than those already evaluated for the transport of UF_6 and would be bounded by the previous environmental analysis (NUREG-0170).

In addition, the staff reviewed the applicant's criticality analyses of the DN30 transportation package containing 30B cylinders with UF_6 enrichments up to 10 wt. percent U-235. The applicant showed and the staff agrees that single DN30 transportation packages and arrays of packages containing 30B cylinders with UF_6 enrichments up to 10 wt. percent U-235 will be adequately subcritical, considering the conservatism present in the applicant's analysis, the reduction of allowable UF_6 mass per 30B cylinder, the benchmarking analysis for determining the upper subcritical limit, and the limited duration and number of shipments that are requested in this exemption. Additionally, the staff agrees that the applicant's calculated critical safety index, based on their normal conditions of transport and hypothetical accident conditions package array analysis, is acceptable. As such, the staff finds with reasonable assurance that the package, with the requested contents, will meet the criticality safety requirements of 10 CFR part 71.

Therefore, the staff has determined that there will be no significant environmental impacts as a result of approving the exemption for the use of 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages for transport of certain limited shipments of UF_6

at an enrichment of greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235. The staff confirmed that no physical or design changes to the DN30 transportation package are proposed in this exemption and that the exemption is limited to the use of approximately 40 to 50 cylinders in 2026–2027 for shipment to a single customer. The staff concluded by evaluation of dose rate and criticality calculations submitted with the application that the package design meets applicable performance standards contained in part 71 of the Commission's regulations. Any radiological or non-radiological environmental impacts of transporting UF_6, enriched to greater than 5, but less than 10 wt. percent U-235, utilizing 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages would be no greater than those already evaluated and would be bounded by the previous environmental analysis (NUREG-0170).

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed exemption request (i.e., the "no-action" alternative). The potential environmental impacts of denying the request would be unchanged from the current impacts of using 30B cylinders within certified DN30 transportation packages for transport of UF_6 at an enrichment of up to 5 wt. percent U-235. Under this alternative, UUSA would need to identify another way to transport HALEU product to the customer, and this alternative shipment arrangement would result in similar environmental impacts.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with NRC policy, on March 20, 2026, the NRC staff provided a draft of the EA to the State of New Mexico and the State of Washington for review. The NRC received a comment from the State of New Mexico on April 8, 2026, after the close of the comment period. The comment did not result in a change to the staff's assessment of potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. The staff

responded separately to ensure the stakeholder received clear and complete closure. No comments were received from the State of Washington.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

The environmental impacts of the proposed action have been reviewed in accordance with the requirements in 10 CFR part 51, which are the NRC's NEPA implementing regulations. Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the NRC finds that the proposed action of granting the exemption for the regulation in 10 CFR 71.17(c)(2) and 71.17(c)(3), which require the GL and CoC user to comply with the terms and conditions of the CoC and submit in writing before the first use of the package, in this particular case limited to the use of approximately 40 to 50 30B cylinders of HALEU in calendar years 2026 through 2027 for shipment to a single customer, would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC has determined that a FONSI is appropriate, and an environmental impact statement is not warranted.

IV. Availability of Documents

The documents identified in the following table are available to interested persons through one or more of the following methods, as indicated.

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	ADAMS ACCESSION NO. / *FEDERAL REGISTER* CITATION
Louisiana Energy Services, LLC, also dba Urenco USA, exemption request, dated October 8, 2025.	ML25281A317
Supplements to request for exemption, dated December 16, 2025, and February 4, 2026.	ML25350C350 ML26035A335
NUREG-0170, Final Environmental Statement on the Transportation of Radioactive Material by Air and Other Modes, Volumes 1 and 2, December 1977.	ML022590355 (Package) ML022590370
Final Rule – 51.22(c)(13)	49 FR 9352, at 9368
Certificate of Compliance No. 9362, Revision No. 5, dated June 11, 2024.	ML24159A018 (Package)

NRC email to State of New Mexico, “Request for State comments regarding an environmental assessment – Urenco USA,” dated March 20, 2026.	ML26098A002
NRC email to State of Washington, “Request for State comments regarding an environmental assessment – Urenco USA,” dated March 20, 2026.	ML26098A001
State of New Mexico email to NRC, “Re: Request for State comments regarding an environmental assessment – Urenco USA,” dated April 8, 2026.	ML26099A018
NRC Response to comment from State of New Mexico, “Response to comment re: Request for State comments regarding and environmental assessment – Urenco USA,” dated April 10, 2026.	ML26100A208

Dated: April 13, 2026.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Yoira Diaz-Sanabria,
Chief,
Storage and Transportation
Licensing Branch,
Division of Fuel Management,
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards.

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