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LR-N02-0215

Mr. Richard J. Conte, Chief
Operator Licensing and Human Performance Branch
Division of Reactor Safety
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Region I
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Dear Mr. Conte:

**RESPONSE TO HOPE CREEK GENERATING STATION REACTOR AND SENIOR
REACTOR OPERATOR INITIAL EXAMINATION REPORT NO. 50-354/02-301
HOPE CREEK GENERATING STATION UNIT NO. 1
DOCKET NO. 50-354**

On May 15, 2002, the NRC issued the Operator Initial Examination Report 50-354/02-301 documenting the results of the examinations conducted during the period of March 11-18, 2002. In accordance with Examination Standards (NUREG-1021), Section ES-501, item C.2.c, the NRC requested that PSEG Nuclear provide a response to the large number of changes to the written exam after it was administered. Specifically the NRC requested that this response provide PSEG Nuclear's perspective on why so many changes were necessary and what actions, if any, have been taken or will be taken to improve future initial licensing examinations.

Following the examinations an apparent cause investigation was conducted to determine the reasons for the number of questions that required changes or deletion following the administration of the exams. Based on this investigation the cause was attributed to less than adequate verification and validation during examination development and technical review. Contributing factors to this cause were less than adequate procedure guidance and the alignment of resources to review changes to the examination.

In reviewing the eleven exam questions requiring changes the following categorization was made. Five (5) questions were validated by licensed operators with no comments or changes required. Five (5) questions were revised during the facility review based on K/A mis-matches and did not receive an independent technical validation after the

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changes were made. One (1) question was revised following the NRC exam review for K/A mis-match and did not receive an independent technical validation after the changes were made.

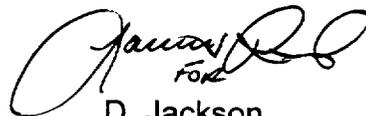
Based on the above the following corrective actions have been identified to address the apparent causes and contributing factors.

1. Applicable procedures will be reviewed and revised to ensure examination development schedules provide sufficient time to perform a quality exam review.
2. Appropriate procedures will be revised to assign a current licensed operator to review any exam changes made after the validation for technical accuracy was completed.
3. A lessons learned discussion will be conducted with individuals involved with future exam development and review.

The above actions are being tracked in accordance with PSEG Nuclear's Corrective Action Program. The above corrective actions are voluntary enhancements to the Licensed Operator Training program and do not constitute commitments.

If you have any questions regarding this submittal, please contact Mr. Brian Thomas at (856) 339-2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Jackson". The signature is stylized and cursive.

D. Jackson
Manager Nuclear Training

Mr. Richard J. Conte
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C Mr. H. J. Miller, Administrator - Region I
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