



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-8064**

September 5, 2002

David L. Wilson, Vice President of
Nuclear Energy
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska 68321

SUBJECT: COOPER NUCLEAR STATION - NRC EXAMINATION REPORT 50-298/02-301

Dear Mr. Wilson:

On August 13, 2002, the NRC completed initial operator licensing examinations at your Cooper Nuclear Station. The enclosed report documents the examination findings, which were discussed on August 9, 2002, with Mr. R. Gardner and other members of your staff.

The examination included the evaluation of four applicants for reactor operator licenses and three applicants for senior operator licenses. We determined that all applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and your response will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Sincerely,

/RA/

Anthony T. Gody, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket: 50-298
License: DPR-46

Enclosure:
NRC Examination Report
50-298/02-301

Nebraska Public Power District

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cc w/enclosure:

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ENCLOSURE

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV

Docket: 50-298
License: DPR 46
Report No.: 50-298/02-301
Licensee: Nebraska Public Power District
Facility: Cooper Nuclear Station
Location: P.O. Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska
Dates: August 5-9, 2002
Inspector: T. O. McKernon, Senior Operations Engineer
T. F. Stetka, Senior Operations Engineer
D. Muller, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Approved By: Anthony T. Gody, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

IR 50-298/02-301; on August 5-9, 2002; Nebraska Public Power District; Cooper Nuclear Station; initial operator licensing examination.

NRC examiners evaluated the competency of four applicants for a reactor operator license and three applicants for senior operator licenses at the Cooper Nuclear Station facility. The facility developed the written and operating examination using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 8, Supplement 1. The written examination was administered to the applicants on the morning of August 2, 2002, by facility proctors in accordance with instructions provided by the chief examiner. The NRC examiners conducted the operating examination between August 5-9, 2002.

Cross-Cutting Issues: Human Performance

- No findings of significance were identified (Section 40A4.1).

Report Details

4. OTHER ACTIVITIES (OA)

4OA4 Initial Operator License Examination

.1 Operator Knowledge and Performance

a. Examination Scope

On August 2, 2002, the licensee proctored the administration of the written examination to the applicants. The licensee staff graded the written examination, analyzed the results, and presented their evaluation to the NRC on August 13, 2002.

The NRC examination team administered the various portions of the operating examination to the six applicants on August 5-9, 2002. The one applicant for instant senior operator license and the four applicants for reactor operator licenses participated in three dynamic simulator scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of ten system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of five administrative tasks. The two applicants that were upgrading from a reactor operator license to a senior operator license each participated in one dynamic simulator scenario, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of five system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of five administrative tasks.

b. Findings

The applicants passed all portions of the examination. The applicants demonstrated good 3-way communications, alarm response, and peer checking. For the written examinations, the reactor operator applicants average score was 91.5 percent and ranged from 90 to 92 percent. The scores for the senior operator applicants ranged from 89 to 94 percent. The overall written examination average was 91.9 percent. The text of the examination questions may be accessed in the ADAMS system as noted in the attachment.

No findings of significance were identified.

.2 Initial Licensing Examination Development

The licensee developed the written examination using facility training and operations staff on the security agreement to prepare and validate the examination.

.2.1 Examination Outline and Examination Package

a. Examination Scope

The facility licensee submitted the written and operating examination outlines on April 22, 2002. The facility licensee submitted the final draft examinations on June 6, 2002. The chief examiner reviewed the submittal against the requirements of NUREG-1021, Revision 8, Supplement 1, and provided comments to the licensee on

June 21, 2002. The licensee incorporated any substantive comments and prepared the examination for administering on August 2, 2002, and during the week of August 5, 2002. The NRC conducted an onsite validation of the operating examination on July 15, 2002. The licensee satisfactorily completed comment resolution on August 9, 2002. The licensee submitted a letter on August 13, 2002, which indicated that there were no comments regarding the written examination.

b. Findings

Region IV approved the examination outlines and determined that the examination initially submitted by the licensee was within the range of acceptability expected for a proposed examination.

.3 Simulation Facility Performance

a. Examination Scope

The examiners observed simulator performance with regard to plant fidelity during the examination validation and administration.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

.4 Examination Security

a. Examination Scope

The examiners reviewed examination security both during the onsite preparation week and examination administration week for compliance with NUREG-1021 requirements. Plans for simulator security and applicant control were reviewed.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

40A5 Management Meetings

Exit Meeting Summary

The chief examiner presented the examination results to Mr. R. Gardner and other members of the staff on August 9, 2002. The licensee acknowledged the findings presented.

The licensee did not identify as proprietary any information or materials examined during the examination.

ATTACHMENT

Partial List of Persons Contacted

Licensee

J. Christensen, Training Manager
P. Fleming, Licensing Manager
R. Gardner, Operations Manager
H. McDaniel, Training Instructor
D. Oleson, Initial Exam Supervisor
D. Pease, Assistant Operations Manager
Mark Schaible, Operations Training Supervisor
M. Tackett, Operations Supervisor
D. Van Der Kamp, Licensing

ADAMS DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

RO and SRO Examination Questions and Answer Key - Accession No. ML022320309
Licensee Post-Examination Letter - Accession No. ML02230507