



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
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ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4006

November 8, 2002

J. V. Parrish (Mail Drop 1023)
Chief Executive Officer
Energy Northwest
P.O. Box 968
Richland, Washington 99352-0968

SUBJECT: COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION - NRC EXAMINATION
REPORT 50-397/02-301

Dear Mr. Parrish:

On October 17, 2002, the NRC completed initial examinations at your Columbia Generating Station. The enclosed report documents the examination findings, which were discussed on October 17, 2002, with Messrs. Gary Hendricks, Randy Guthrie, and other members of your staff.

The examination included the evaluation of six applicants for reactor operator licenses and nine applicants for senior operator licenses. We determined that 14 of the 15 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, its enclosure(s), 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: 50-397
License: NPF-21

Enclosure:
NRC Inspection Report
50-397/02-301

Energy Northwest

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ENCLOSURE

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV

Docket: 50-397
License: NPF-21
Report No.: 50-397/02-301
Licensee: Energy Northwest
Facility: Columbia Generating Station
Location: Richland, Washington
Dates: October 4-17, 2002
Inspectors: T. F. Stetka, Senior Operations Engineer, Operations Branch
H. F. Bundy, Senior Operations Engineer, Operations Branch
R. E. Lantz, Senior Emergency Preparedness Inspector, Plant Support
Branch
T. O. McKernon, Senior Operations Engineer, Operations Branch
Approved By: Anthony T. Gody, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Columbia Generating Station NRC Examination Report 50-397/02-301

ER 50-397/02-301; on October 4-17, 2002; Energy Northwest, Columbia Generating Station; Initial Operator Licensing Examination.

NRC examiners evaluated the competency of six applicants for reactor operator licenses and nine applicants for senior operator licenses at the Columbia Generating Station. The licensee developed the written and operating examination using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 8, Supplement 1. Licensee proctors administered the written examination to all applicants on October 4, 2002. The NRC administered the operating tests on October 8-17, 2002.

Cornerstone: 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 October 4, 2002, the licensee proctored the administration of the written examination to all 15 applicants. The licensee staff graded the written examinations, analyzed the results, and presented their analysis to the NRC on October 21, 2002.

The NRC examination team administered the operating examinations to the 15 applicants on October 8-17, 2002. Each reactor operator applicant participated in two dynamic simulator scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of ten system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of one task or two questions in five areas. The six instant senior operator applicants participated in three scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of ten system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of one task or two questions in five areas. The three applicants that were upgrading their reactor operator license to a senior operator license participated in two scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of five system tasks and an administrative test consisting of one task or two questions in five areas.

b. Findings

All applicants passed all parts of the operating examinations. The applicants demonstrated good 3-way communications, alarm response, and peer checking. For the written examinations, 14 of the 15 applicants passed the examination. The average written examination score for reactor operator applicants was 87.3 percent, and the average score for senior operator applicants was 89.1 percent. The reactor operator applicant scores ranged from 76 to 95 percent, and the senior operator applicant scores ranged from 84 to 95 percent.

The licensee conducted a performance analysis for the written examinations with emphasis on seven questions missed by half or more of the applicants and submitted this analysis to the chief examiner for review. After reviewing the licensee's analysis, the chief examiner concluded that all but one question were valid and that there were no apparent training deficiencies. The one question that was not valid, Question Ex02008 (Number 11 on the reactor operator examination and Number 12 on the senior operator examination), had the answer incorrect on the answer key. This answer key error was corrected and examination grades changed as applicable. There were no post-examination comments on examination questions. The analysis identified no common knowledge deficiency. No remediation training was determined to be necessary following the examinations. The text of the examination questions and the performance analysis may be accessed in the ADAMS system as noted in the attachment to this report.

No findings of significance were identified.

.2 Initial Licensing Examination Development

The licensee developed the written examination in accordance with NUREG-1021, Revision 8, Supplement 1, 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 integrated examination outlines 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. The facility licensee submitted the final draft examination package on August 13, 2002. The chief examiner reviewed the draft submittal against the requirements of NUREG-1021, Revision 8, Supplement 1, and provided comments to the licensee on the examination on September 9, 2002. The NRC conducted an onsite validation of the operating examinations and provided further comments during the week of September 23, 2002. The licensee satisfactorily completed comment resolution on October 2, 2002.

b. Findings

Region IV approved the initial examination outline and advised the licensee to proceed with the operating examination development.

The examiners determined that the written and operating examinations initially submitted by the licensee were within the range of acceptability expected for a proposed examination.

No findings of significance were identified.

.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.

.4OA5 Management Meeting

Exit Meeting Summary

The chief examiner presented the examination results to Messrs. Gary Hendrick, Operations Production Manager, and Randy Guthrie, Operations Training Manager, at the conclusion of the operating examination on October 17, 2002. The licensee acknowledged the findings presented.

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

ATTACHMENT

KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

Licensee

N. Patrou, Operations Initial Training Lead
S. Hutchison, Senior Training Specialist
J. Redwine, Simulator Training Specialist
C. Golightly, Simulator Supervision

NRC

G. Repogle, Senior Resident Inspector

ADAMS DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

Accession No. ML023110529: Written examination for reactor and senior reactor operators
Accession No. ML023110531: Written examination performance analysis
Accession No. ML023110530: Written examination applicant questions