

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

September 22, 1988

NRC INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 88-78: IMPLEMENTATION OF REVISED NRC-ADMINISTERED  
REQUALIFICATION EXAMINATIONS

Addressees:

All holders of operating licenses or construction permits for nuclear power reactors.

Purpose:

This information notice is being provided to inform addressees of the NRC staff's intention to implement a revised requalification examination program beginning in October 1988. It is expected that recipients will review the information for applicability to their facilities and consider actions, as appropriate. However, suggestions contained in this information notice do not constitute NRC requirements; therefore, no specific action or written response is required.

Background:

The regulation 10 CFR Part 55, which became effective on May 26, 1987, promulgated a requirement that each holder of an operator's license in a nuclear power facility pass "a comprehensive requalification written examination and operating test administered by the Commission during the term of a six-year license." The initial program to implement this regulation experienced difficulty because of a number of deficiencies that were made known to the NRC staff. In September 1987, the staff suspended all NRC-administered requalification examinations to evaluate the feedback received from the field and to consider appropriate revisions to the program. The program now has been revised and field tested at one site in each of the five regions. Having incorporated corrections of the known deficiencies of the previous program and also the lessons from field testing at the five sites, full-scale resumption of the NRC-administered requalification examination will begin in October 1988.

Discussion:

The requalification examinations conducted by the NRC will consist of the following:

1. Operating Test

- a. Crew Evaluations: Evaluations of crew performance will be performed in the simulator. Individual operator weaknesses will be flagged for followup evaluation during the plant walkthrough.

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- b. Individual Evaluations: The NRC will observe plant walkthroughs during which operators will be expected to successfully implement job performance measures for selected tasks. Operators also will be expected to demonstrate understanding of the job performance measures by satisfactorily answering performance-based questions related to the tasks.

## 2. Written Examination


The written examination will be administered in an open-reference format, which allows the use of available reference materials, and will consist of the following two sections:

- a. Plant Operations: This section will be administered in a simulator or an equivalent device. Questions will be based on the status of the "frozen" simulator (or the equivalent device). The operator will be able to refer to simulator indications and reference materials present in the simulator in responding to test questions.
- b. Limits and Controls: This section will be conducted in a simulator or a classroom. Questions will be asked about plant procedures and administrative controls. A complete set of reference materials used to operate the plant will be available during the written examination.

Before the examination is administered, all aspects of the examination will be reviewed by facility representatives to ensure that examination questions, scenarios, and job performance measures are performance based and technically correct. This revised process will result in an examination that accurately reflects the ability of operators to satisfactorily perform licensed duties.

The staff fully intends to continue to improve the process on the basis of the feedback received so as to maximize operational safety. Addressees may wish to provide a copy of this information notice to each licensed operator and senior operator at their facilities.

No specific action or written response is required by this information notice. If you have any questions about this matter, please contact the technical contact listed below or the Regional Administrator of the appropriate regional office.

  
Charles E. Rossi, Director  
Division of Operational Events Assessment  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Technical Contact: L. A. Wiens, NRR  
(301) 492-3171

Attachment: List of Recently Issued NRC Information Notices

LIST OF RECENTLY ISSUED  
 NRC INFORMATION NOTICES

| Information Notice No. | Subject  | Date of Issuance | Issued to  |
|------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| 88-77                  | Inadvertent Reactor Vessel Overfill  | 9/22/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for BWRs.  |
| 88-76                  | Recent Discovery of a Phenomenon not Previously Considered in the Design of Secondary Containment Pressure Control                                     | 9/19/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |
| 88-75                  | Disabling of Diesel Generator Output Circuit Breakers by Anti-Pump Circuitry   | 9/16/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |
| 88-74                  | Potentially Inadequate Performance of ECCS in PWRs During Recirculation Operation Following a LOCA   | 9/14/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for W and B&W-designed nuclear power reactors.                                       |
| 88-73                  | Direction-Dependent Leak Characteristics of Containment Purge Valves   | 9/8/88           | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |
| 88-72                  | Inadequacies in the Design of dc Motor-Operated Valves   | 9/2/88           | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |
| 88-71                  | Possible Environmental Effect of the Reentry of COSMOS 1900 and Request for Collection of Licensee Radioactivity Measurements Attributed to That Event | 9/1/88           | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors, fuel cycle licensees, and Priority 1 material licensees. |
| 88-70                  | Check Valve Inservice Testing Program Deficiencies   | 8/29/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |
| 88-69                  | Movable Contact Finger Binding in HFA Relays Manufactured by General Electric (GE)   | 8/19/88          | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.  |

OL = Operating License  
 CP = Construction Permit

- b. Individual Evaluations: The NRC will observe plant walkthroughs during which operators will be expected to successfully implement job performance measures for selected tasks. Operators also will be expected to demonstrate understanding of the job performance measures by satisfactorily answering performance-based questions related to the tasks.

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Before the examination is administered, all aspects of the examination will be reviewed by facility representatives to ensure that examination questions, scenarios, and job performance measures are performance based and technically correct. This revised process will result in an examination that accurately reflects the ability of operators to satisfactorily perform licensed duties.

The staff fully intends to continue to improve the process on the basis of the feedback received so as to maximize operational safety. Addressees may wish to provide a copy of this information notice to each licensed operator and senior operator at their facilities.

No specific action or written response is required by this information notice. If you have any questions about this matter, please contact the technical contact listed below or the Regional Administrator of the appropriate regional office.

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Attachment: List of Recently Issued NRC Information Notices

\*SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCES

\*OGCB:DOEA:NRR \*LOLB:DLPQ:NRR \*LOLB:DLPQ:NRR  
NPKadambi LAWiens JNHannon  
09/08/88 09/12/88 09/13/88

D/DOEA:NRR \*C/OGCB:DOEA:NRR  
CERose81 CHBerlinger  
09/19/88 09/19/88  
\*D/DLPQ:NRR \*RPB:ARM  
JRoe TechEd  
09/14/88 09/09/88

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The staff fully intends to continue to improve the process on the basis of the feedback received so as to maximize operational safety. The staff suggests that a copy of this information notice be provided to each licensed operator and senior operator at each facility.

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|                    |               |               |             |             |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>NPK 9/12/88</i> | <i>PP for</i> | <i>H</i>      | D/DOEA:NRR  | <i>CUR</i>  |
| *OGCB:DOEA:NRR     | LOLB:DLPQ:NRR | LOLB:DLPQ:NRR | CERossi     | CHBerlinger |
| NPKadambi          | LAWiens       | JNHannon      | 09/ /88     | 09/14/88    |
| 09/08/88           | 09/12/88      | 09/13/88      | *D/DLPQ:NRR | *RPB:ARM    |
|                    |               |               | JRoe        | TechEd      |
|                    |               |               | 3           | 09/09/88    |
|                    |               |               | 9/14/88     |             |