

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

November 20, 1989

NRC INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 89-75: FALSIFICATION OF WELDER QUALIFICATIONS FOR CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES

Addressees:

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

Purpose:

This information notice is intended to alert addressees to potential problems related to the need to assure that welding personnel hired to perform activities affecting safety are properly qualified in accordance with ASME Code requirements. It is expected that recipients will review the information for applicability to their facilities and activities, and consider actions, as appropriate, to avoid similar problems. However, suggestions contained in this information notice do not constitute NRC requirements; therefore, no specific action or written response is required.

Description of Circumstances:

In 1984, Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO) hired Southwestern Engineering Company (SECO) to modify and install moisture separator reheater (MSR) internals at the licensee's North Anna and Surry Nuclear Power Stations in late 1984 and early 1985. SECO, in turn, formed a joint venture with Power-plant Specialists, Inc. (PSI) for craft labor (boilermakers, welders, etc.) to perform the work. Welder qualification for the MSR projects was to be completed in accordance with the specifications set forth in Section IX of the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code. Investigation activities by NRC, prompted by an allegation, revealed that 16 of the 45 boilermaker/welder personnel utilized for the VEPCO projects were properly tested and certified by an authorized, independent testing facility. Although Welder Qualification Test (WQT) records were completed by PSI for the remaining 29 welder personnel, indicating that the test welds were prepared, welded, and tested in accordance with the requirements of Section IX of the ASME Code, the investigation revealed that company officials intentionally falsified the welders' records by certifying them without requiring the proficiency tests.

Discussion:

It is important to note that it is the responsibility of each licensee to assure that welders assigned to nuclear power plant tasks, whether or not

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the tasks are categorized as safety-related, are qualified to the appropriate standard. In the specific circumstances cited above, the welder qualification records were falsified by PSI to the licensee through SECO, and recipients of this notice should be aware of the potential for this situation at their facilities.

This information notice requires no specific action or written response. If you have any questions about the information in this notice, please contact one of the technical contacts listed below or the appropriate NRR project manager.



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

Technical Contact: Gregory C. Cwalina, NRR  
(301) 492-3221

Walter P. Haass, NRR  
(301) 492-3219

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Attachment: List of Recently Issued NRC Information Notices

LIST OF RECENTLY ISSUED  
NRC INFORMATION NOTICES

Information Notice No.	Subject	Date of Issuance	Issued to
89-74	Clarification of Transportation Requirements Applicable to Return of Spent Radiopharmacy Dosages from Users to Suppliers	11/7/89	All manufacturers and distributors of radiopharmaceuticals for medical use, nuclear pharmacies, and medical licensees.
89-73	Potential Overpressurization of Low Pressure Systems	11/1/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.
89-72	Failure of Licensed Senior Operators to Classify Emergency Events Properly	10/24/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.
89-71	Diversion of the Residual Heat Removal Pump Seal Cooling Water Flow During Recirculation Operation Following a Loss-of-Coolant Accident	10/19/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.
89-70	Possible Indications of Misrepresented Vendor Products	10/11/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.
89-69	Loss of Thermal Margin Caused by Channel Box Bow	9/29/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for BWRs.
89-68	Evaluation of Instrument Setpoints During Modifications	9/25/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.
89-67	Loss of Residual Heat Removal Caused by Accumulator Nitrogen Injection	9/13/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for PWRs.
89-66	Qualification Life of Solenoid Valves	9/11/89	All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors.

OL = Operating License  
CP = Construction Permit

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Charles E. Rossi, Director  
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(301) 492-3221

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(301) 492-3219

Attachment: List of Recently Issued NRC Information Notices

\*Previously concurred.

VIP:DRIS*	VIB:DRIS*	VIB:DRIS*	C:VIB:DRIS*	D:DRIS:NRR*
WPHaass	GCCwalina	ETBaker	EWBrach	BKGrimes
10/03/89	10/04/89	10/25/89	10/25/89	10/25/89

\*\*with noted changes DOEA:OGCB\*\*  
CBerlinger  
10/26/89

OI\*  
BHayes  
11/6/89

~~D:DOEA-NRR~~  
CEROSST  
11/14/89

Discussion:

It is important that licensees be aware of the potential for unqualified welders to be assigned to nuclear power plant tasks, whether or not the tasks are categorized as safety-related. In the specific circumstances cited above, the welder qualification records were falsified by PSI to the licensee through SECo, and recipients of this notice should be aware of the potential for this situation at their facilities.

No specific action or written response is required by this information notice. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please get in touch with the technical contact identified 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: Gregory C. Cwalina  
(301) 492-3221

Walter P. Haass  
(301) 492-3219

Attachment:

- 1. List of Recently Issued NRC Information Notices

Document Name: IN NOTICE-HAASS

\*Previously concurred.

VIP:DRIS\*  
WPHaass  
10/03/89

VIB:DRIS\*  
GCCwalina  
10/04/89

*ETB*  
VIB:DRIS  
ETBaker  
10/25/89

*EW*  
C:VIP/DRIS  
EWBrach  
10/25/89

*BR*  
D:DRIS:NRR  
BRGrimes  
10/25/89

DOEA  
CERossi  
10/ /89

*with noted changes*  
DOEA:DCCB  
CBERLINGER  
10/26/89

Add OI to list of concurrences

*OT: DMH 11/6/89*  
*B. HAYES*

Discussion:

Since the MSR internals are not categorized as safety-related components, adherence to the provisions of Appendix B and 50.55a of 10 CFR Part 50, is not required. Rather, the provisions of Appendix A (GDC 1) and 50.54(h) of 10 CFR Part 50 are more appropriate since the components are categorized as important to safety. In any event, it is important that licensees be aware of the potential for unqualified welders to be assigned to nuclear power plant tasks, whether they be categorized as safety related or not. In the specific circumstances cited above, the welder qualification records were falsified by PSI to the licensee through SECo, and recipients of this notice should be particularly aware of the potential for this situation at their facilities when contracting with these types of organizations. Proper auditing of a contactors activities should provide the necessary assurance of conformance to contractual and regulatory requirements.

No specific action or written response is required by this information notice. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please get in touch with the technical contact identified 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: Edward T. Baker  
(301) 492-0959

Attachment:

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DISTRIBUTION:

GCWalina  
EWBrach  
CBerlinger  
Tech Editor  
JZwolinski  
CERossi

Document Name: IN NOTICE HAASS

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