



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4005**

June 27, 2005

Randall K. Edington, Vice
President-Nuclear and CNO
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 98
Brownville, NE 68321

SUBJECT: Cooper Nuclear Station - NRC EXAMINATION REPORT 05000298/2005301

Dear Mr. Edington:

On June 17, 2005, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) completed an examination at your Cooper Nuclear Station. The enclosed report documents the examination findings which were discussed on June 17, 2005, with you and other members of your staff.

The examination included an evaluation of six applicants for operator licenses and four applicants for senior operator licenses. The license examiners determined that nine of the ten applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued.

No findings of significance were identified.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be 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:
Examination Report 05000298/2005301
w/Attachment Supplemental Information

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ENCLOSURE

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV

Docket: 50-298
License: DPR 46
Report No.: 05000298/2005-301
Licensee: Nebraska Public Power District
Facility: Cooper Nuclear Station
Location: P.O. Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska
Dates: June 13-17, 2005
Inspectors: P. Gage, Senior Operations Engineer
S. Garchow, Operations Engineer
K. Clayton, Operations Engineer
Approved By: Anthony T. Gody, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

IR 05000298/2005301 on June 13-17, 2005; Cooper Nuclear Station, Initial operator licensing examination.

NRC examiners evaluated the competency of six applicants for operator licenses and four applicants for senior operator licenses. The licensee and the NRC developed the written examination and the operating examination using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9. The NRC proctored the written examination on June 13, 2005. The NRC examiners administered the operating examination on June 14-17, 2005.

No findings of significance were identified.

REPORT DETAILS

4OA5 Initial License Examination

.1 Operator Knowledge and Performance

a. Examination Scope

The NRC examination team administered the written and operating examinations to ten applicants on June 13-17, 2005. The six operator applicants and the instant senior operator applicant participated in 2 dynamic simulator scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough examination consisting of 10 or 11 job performance measures, and an administrative examination consisting of 4 or 5 job performance measures. The three senior operator upgrades participated in 1 dynamic simulator scenario, a control room and facilities walkthrough examination consisting of 5 job performance measures, and an administrative examination consisting of 5 job performance measures.

On June 13, 2005, the NRC proctored the administration of the written examination to all ten applicants with copies of the answer sheets provided to the Cooper Nuclear Station training staff at the conclusion of the written examination.

b. Findings

Nine of the ten applicants passed all parts of the examinations. One applicant failed the written examination. The average score for the operator applicants was 82.9 percent and the average score for the senior operator applicants was 81.8 percent. The operator applicant scores ranged from 80 to 86.7 percent. The senior operator applicant scores ranged from 76 to 86 percent.

The licensee conducted a performance analysis for the written examinations with an emphasis on 19 questions missed by one-half, or greater, of the applicants on each examination. This analysis determined the answer key was incorrect for one question on the combined reactor operator and senior reactor operator examination. Upon subsequent review, the examiners agreed with this analysis and corrected the answer key.

.2 Initial Licensing Examination Development

The written examination was developed by the NRC in accordance with NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9. The written examination was validated by seven currently licensed operators and recommended changes were implemented. The operating examination was developed as a cooperative effort between the NRC and the licensee's training staff. The operating examination was also validated by currently licensed operators. Licensee facility training and operations staff involved in examination development and/or validation were on a security agreement.

.2.1 Operating Examination Outline and Examination Package

a. Examination Scope

The NRC staff completed the operating test outlines on February 14, 2005. The outlines were reviewed against the requirements of NUREG-1021, Revision 9 by the NRC staff and licensee with no comments. The chief examiner conducted an onsite validation of the examinations and provided comments on May 13, 2005. These comments were incorporated into the exams.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

.2.2 Simulator Facility Performance

a. Scope

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

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

.2.3 Examination Security

a. Scope

The examiners reviewed examination security both during the onsite preparation and examination administration weeks with respect to NUREG-1021 requirements. Plans for simulator security and applicant control were reviewed and discussed with licensee personnel.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

4OA6 Meetings, Including Exit

On June 17, 2005, the examiners presented examination results to Mr. Randall Edington and other members of his staff. The examiners confirmed that proprietary information was not provided or examined during the examination process.

ATTACHMENT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

ATTACHMENT

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

Licensee personnel

E. McCutchen, Senior Licensing Engineer
J. Florence, Simulator Supervisor
B. Murphy, Shift Manager
D. Goodman, Control Room Supervisor
K. Chambliss, Operations Manager
D. Werner, Operations Training Supervisor - Requalification
R. Penfield, Shift Manager
M. Tackett, Operations Supervisor
M. Gonnella, Reactor Operator
D. Tune, Superintendent - Operations Training
M. Barton, Licensed Operator Instructor
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S. Minahan, General Manager Plant Operations
R. Edington, Vice-President Nuclear, Chief Nuclear Officer
J. Waid, Training Manager