



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
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July 31, 2007

Joseph E. Venable
Vice President of Operations
Entergy Operations, Inc.
River Bend Station
5485 US Highway 61N
St. Francisville, LA 70775

SUBJECT: RIVER BEND STATION - NRC INITIAL OPERATOR LICENSING
EXAMINATION 05000458/2007-301

Dear Mr. Venable:

On June 15, 2007, the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) completed an examination at your River Bend Station. The enclosed report documents the examination findings, which were discussed on June 28, 2007, with members of your staff.

The examination included the evaluation of six applicants for reactor operator licenses, four applicants for instant senior operator licenses and two applicants for upgrade senior operator licenses. The written and operating examinations were developed using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9. The license examiners determined that all 12 applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued.

No findings of significance were identified during this examination.

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: 50-458
License: NPF-47

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EXAMINATION REPORT
U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV

Dockets: 50-458
Licenses: NPF-47

Report : 05000458/2007-301

Licensee: Entergy Operations, Inc.

Facility: River Bend Station

Location: 5485 US Highway 61N
St. Francisville, La. 70775

Dates: June 11 - 15, 2007, and June 28, 2007

Examiners: Michael Murphy, Mike Bielby, Steve Garchow, Tom McKernon
Gabriel Apger (Under Instruction)

Approved: A. T. Gody, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Enclosure

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

ER 05000458/2007-301; 6/11-15, 2007; River Bend Station; Initial Operator Licensing Examinations.

NRC examiners evaluated the competency of six applicants for reactor operator licenses, four applicants for instant senior operator licenses and two applicants for upgrade senior operator licenses at the River Bend Station. The NRC developed the written examination and the licensee developed the operating examination using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9. The written examination was administered by the facility licensee on June 8, 2007. NRC examiners administered the operating tests on June 11 - 15, 2007. The license examiners determined that all 12 of the applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued.

No findings of significance were identified.

REPORT DETAILS

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4. OTHER ACTIVITIES (OA)

4OA5 Other Activities (Initial Operator License Examination)

.1 License Applications

a. Inspection Scope

The examiners reviewed the 12 applications submitted by the licensee for each of the license applicants. The applications were submitted on NRC Form 398, "Personal Qualification Statement," and NRC Form 396, "Certification of Medical Examination by Facility Licensee." The examiners also audited two license applications to confirm accurate documentation of the subject applicant's qualifications. This satisfies the 10 percent audit requirement that focuses on the applicant's experience and on-the-job training, including control manipulations that provided significant reactivity changes.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

.2 Operator Knowledge and Performance

a. Examination Scope

On June 8, 2007, the facility licensee proctored the administration of the written examinations to all 12 applicants. The licensee staff graded the written examinations, analyzed the results, and presented their analysis to the NRC on June 15, 2007.

The NRC examination team administered the various portions of the operating examination to all 12 applicants on June 11 - 15, 2007. The 6 applicants seeking reactor operator licenses participated in two dynamic simulator scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of 10 system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of five administrative tasks. The three applicants seeking instant senior operator licenses participated in two 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 applicants for upgrade senior operator licenses participated in two dynamic simulator scenarios, a control room and facilities walkthrough test consisting of five system tasks, and an administrative test consisting of five administrative tasks.

b. Findings

All 12 of the applicants passed all parts of the examinations. There were no identified generic weaknesses on the examination.

For the written examinations, reactor operator applicants average score was 85.7 percent, overall senior reactor operator applicant's average score was 86.7 percent and ranged from 85.0 to 89.0 percent. The average score on the senior operator only portion of the exam was 86.7 percent and ranged from 80.0 to 92.0 percent.

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Chapter ES-403 and Form ES-403-1 of NUREG 1021 require the licensee to analyze the validity of any written examination questions that were missed by half or more of the applicants. The licensee conducted this performance analysis and submitted the analysis to the chief examiner on June 15, 2007. The licensee recommended two answers be considered correct on one question, number 25.

The licensee's recommendations and the NRC response follow:

Reactor/Senior Operator Question 25, missed by 11 applicants:

Which of the following would require entering a Technical Specification Limiting condition of Operation (LCO)?

- A. 100 psig in the Primary Airlock Seal Air Flask
- B. 2 gallons per minute unidentified leakage
- C. 130°F in the RHR Equipment Area
- D. 10 psig RCIC turbine exhaust diaphragm pressure

Answer: C

- A. > 90 psig
- B. Less than or equal to 2 gpm
- D. <20 psig

The facility recommended changing the answer key so that answers C and D would be considered correct. This change was based on information contained in training material, Technical Specifications 3.3.6.1, 3.3.5.3, and the Technical Requirements Manual 3.3.6.1.

The facility observed that in addition to the correct answer, the answer key contained information regarding the reason for the distractors. For "D" it stated "<20 psig". This corresponded to the allowable value provided in TS 3.3.6.1 "Primary Containment and Drywell Isolation Instrumentation". The key did not consider, however, the nominal setpoint of 10 psig provided in TR 3.3.6.1. This 10 psig setpoint is in agreement with AOP-0003 information that identified that the 10 psig Reactor Core Isolation Cooling (RCIC) turbine exhaust diaphragm high pressure is a RCIC system isolation signal that isolates group two valves. When these valves isolate, the system becomes inoperable causing entry into Technical Specification LCO 3.5.3 Condition A.

NRC RESPONSE - The recommended change to the answer key was reviewed and it was concluded that answers C and D are both correct. The receipt of a 10 psig signal at the RCIC turbine exhaust diaphragm results in the isolation of the RCIC steam supply rendering RCIC unable to perform its function, requiring entry into TS LCO 3.5.3 Condition A.

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.3 Initial Licensing Examination Development

a. Examination Scope

The NRC developed the written examination and the licensee developed the operating examination in accordance with NUREG-1021, Revision 9. All licensee facility training and operations staff involved in examination preparation and validation were on a security agreement. The facility licensee submitted the integrated examination outlines on March 27, 2007. The chief examiner reviewed the outlines against the requirements of NUREG-1021, Revision 9; there were no significant comments. The facility licensee submitted the draft examination package on April 26, 2007. The NRC conducted an onsite validation of the operating examinations and provided comments during the week of May 28, 2007.

b. Findings

Examiners approved the initial examination outline with minor comments and advised the licensee to proceed with the operating examination development.

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

No findings of significance were identified.

.4 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.

.5 Examination Security

a. Examination Scope

The examiners reviewed examination security for examination development during both the onsite preparation week and examination administration week for compliance with NUREG-1021 requirements.

Plans for simulator security and applicant control were reviewed and discussed with licensee personnel during the onsite preparation week.

b. Findings

No findings of significance were identified.

4OA6 Meetings, Including Exit

On June 28, 2007, the examination results were provided to the facility licensee. The examiners confirmed that proprietary information was not provided or examined during the examination process.

4OA7 Licensee-Identified Violations

No findings of significance were identified.