



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

REGION III
2443 WARRENVILLE ROAD, SUITE 210
LISLE, IL 60532-4352

October 13, 2010

Mr. Christopher J. Schwarz
Vice President, Operations
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Palisades Nuclear Plant
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway
Covert, MI 49043-9530

SUBJECT: PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT
NRC INITIAL LICENSE EXAMINATION REPORT 05000255/2010301(DRS)

Dear Mr. Schwarz:

On September 1, 2010, the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) completed the initial operator licensing examination process at your Palisades Plant. The enclosed report presents the results of the examination. On August 25, 2010, a preliminary debrief meeting was conducted between you and other members of your staff with Mr. Bruce Palagi, Chief Examiner. The NRC received the facility's letter regarding post-examination comments on September 1, 2010. The chief examiner conducted an exit meeting via telephone to discuss preliminary examination results with Mr. B. Nixon on September 13, 2010.

The NRC examiners administered initial license examination operating tests from August 16 through August 25, 2010. Members of the Palisades Training Department administered the initial license written examination on August 27, 2010. Four reactor operator and seven senior reactor operator license examinations were administered. One of the applicants was a previously licensed reactor operator at the Palisades Plant. The results of the examinations were finalized on September 23, 2010. All eleven applicants passed all sections of their examinations resulting in the issuance of four reactor operator and seven senior reactor operator licenses.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records System (PARS) component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

C. Schwarz

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We will gladly discuss any questions you have concerning this examination.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Hironori Peterson, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket No. 50-255
License No. DPR-20

Enclosures: 1. Operator Licensing Examination Report 05000255/2010301(DRS)
 2. Simulation Facility Report
 3. Written Examinations and Answer Keys (RO and SRO)

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U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION III

Docket Nos: 50-255

License Nos: DPR-20

Report No: 05000255/2010301(DRS)

Licensee: Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.

Facility: Palisades Nuclear Plant

Location: Covert, MI

Dates: August 16 through September 1, 2010

Examiners: B. Palagi, Chief Examiner
M. Morris, Examiner
R. Walton, Examiner

Approved by: Hironori Peterson, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

ER 05000255/2010301(DRS); 08/16/10 - 09/01/10; Palisades Nuclear Plant; Initial License Examination Report.

The announced operator licensing initial examination was conducted by regional examiners in accordance with the guidance of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9, Supplement 1.

Examination Summary:

- Eleven examinations were administered. All eleven applicants passed all sections of their examinations resulting in the issuance of four reactor operator and seven senior reactor operator licenses. (Section 4OA5.1)

REPORT DETAILS

4. OTHER ACTIVITIES (OA)

4OA5 Other

.1 Initial Licensing Examinations

a. Examination Scope

The NRC examiners conducted an announced operator licensing initial examination during the weeks of August 16 and August 23, 2010. The facility licensee's training staff used the guidance prescribed in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9, Supplement 1, to prepare the outline and develop the written examination and operating test. The examiners administered the operating test, consisting of job performance measures and dynamic simulator scenarios, during the period of August 16 through August 25, 2010. The facility licensee administered the written examination on August 27, 2010. Four reactor operator and seven senior reactor operator applicants were examined. During the on-site validation week of July 26, 2010, the examiners audited 3 license applications for accuracy.

b. Findings

Written Examination

The NRC examiners determined that the written examination, as originally submitted by the licensee, was within the range of acceptability expected for a proposed examination. All changes made to the submitted examination were made in accordance with NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9, Supplement 1. The licensee graded the written examination on August 27, 2010, and conducted a review of each question to determine the accuracy and validity of the examination questions. On September 1, 2010, the NRC received the licensee's letter concerning the post examination comments. The licensee did not submit any post examination comments for consideration by the NRC examiners when grading the written examination or enhancements based on a post examination review with the applicants.

Operating Test

The NRC examiners determined that the operating test, as originally submitted by the licensee, was within the range of acceptability expected for a proposed examination. All changes made to the submitted examination were made in accordance with NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 9, Supplement 1.

Examination Results

The NRC examiners completed the examination grading and the results of the examinations were finalized on September 23, 2010. All eleven applicants passed all sections of their examinations resulting in the issuance of four reactor operator and seven senior reactor operator licenses.

.2 Examination Security

a. Inspection Scope

The NRC examiners briefed the facility contact on the NRC's requirements and guidelines related to examination physical security (e.g., access restrictions and simulator considerations) and integrity in accordance with 10 CFR 55.49, "Integrity of Examinations and Tests," and NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standard for Power Reactors," Revision 9, Supplement 1. The examiners reviewed and observed the licensee's implementation and controls of examination security and integrity measures (e.g., security agreements) throughout the examination process.

b. Findings

No Findings

4OA6 Meetings

Debrief

The chief examiner presented the examination team's preliminary observations and findings on August 25, 2010, to Mr. C. Schwarz, Site Vice President, and members of the Palisades Operations and Training Department staff.

Exit Meeting

The chief examiner conducted an exit meeting by telephone on September 13, 2010, with Mr. B. Nixon, Training Manager. The NRC's preliminary examination results were provided to Mr. Nixon during the telephone discussion. The examiners asked the licensee whether any of the material used to develop or administer the examination should be considered proprietary. No proprietary or sensitive information was identified during the examination or debrief/exit meetings.

ATTACHMENT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

Licensee

C. Schwarz, Site Vice President
T. Kirwin, Plant General Manager
M. Sicard, Operations Manager
T. Mulford, Operations Shift Manager
B. Nixon, Training Manager
S. Martin, Operations Initial Training Superintendent
J. Iliff, Lead Exam Author
P. Schmidt, Simulator Superintendent
T. Davis, Licensing Specialist

NRC

B Palagi, Chief Examiner
M. Morris, Examiner
T. Talor, Resident Inspector

ITEMS OPENED, CLOSED, AND DISCUSSED

Opened, Closed, and Discussed

None

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADAMS	Agency-Wide Document Access and Management System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DRS	Division of Reactor Safety
NRC	U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
PARS	Publicly Available Records System

SIMULATION FACILITY REPORT

Facility Licensee: Palisades Nuclear Plant

Facility Licensee Docket No. 50-255

Operating Tests Administered: August 16 through August 25, 2010

The following documents observations made by the NRC examination team during the initial operator license examination. These observations do not constitute audit or inspection findings and are not, without further verification and review, indicative of non-compliance with 10 CFR 55.45(b). These observations do not affect NRC certification or approval of the simulation facility other than to provide information which may be used in future evaluations. No licensee action is required in response to these observations.

During the conduct of the simulator portion of the operating tests, the following items were observed:

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
	None

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS AND ANSWER KEYS (RO/SRO)

RO Initial Examination ADAMS Accession #ML102630312

SRO Initial Examination ADAMS Accession #ML102630307

C. Schwarz

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We will gladly discuss any questions you have concerning this examination.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Hironori Peterson, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket No. 50-255
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