



REGULATORY GUIDE

OFFICE OF STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

REGULATORY GUIDE 1.134

MEDICAL EVALUATION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PERSONNEL REQUIRING OPERATOR LICENSES

A. INTRODUCTION

Section 55.10, "Contents of Applications," and § 55.33, "Renewal of Licenses," of 10 CFR Part 55, "Operators' Licenses," require that each application for an initial or renewal operator or senior operator license contain a report of medical examination by a licensed medical practitioner in the form prescribed in § 55.60, "Examination Form." Section 55.11, "Requirements for the Approval of Applications," and § 55.33 of 10 CFR Part 55 state that an application for an initial or renewal operator or senior operator license will be approved if, among other things, the physical condition and general health of the applicant are not such as might cause operational errors endangering public health and safety. This guide describes a method acceptable to the NRC staff for providing the information needed by the Commission for its evaluation of the medical qualifications of applicants for initial or renewal operator or senior operator licenses for nuclear power plants. The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards has been consulted concerning this guide and has concurred in the regulatory position.

B. DISCUSSION

Section 55.60 of 10 CFR Part 55 requires the licensed medical practitioner and the applicant for an initial or renewal operator or senior operator license to complete and sign Form NRC-396, "Certificate of Medical Examination." The examination form is then sent to the NRC and becomes part of the license application. The NRC often has to request additional information because the licensed medical practitioner's evaluation of the applicant's medical history or physical condition is not sufficiently detailed to determine an applicant's qualification.

*Lines indicate substantive changes from previous issue.

Working Group ANS-3.4 of Subcommittee ANS-3, Reactor Operations, of the American Nuclear Society has developed a standard prescribing minimum requirements necessary to determine that the physical condition and general health of nuclear reactor operators are not such as might cause operational errors. This standard was approved by the American National Standards Committee N18, Nuclear Design Criteria, and was subsequently approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on April 12, 1976. The criteria presented in ANSI N546-1976,¹ "Medical Certification and Monitoring of Personnel Requiring Operator Licenses for Nuclear Power Plants," should provide an examining licensed medical practitioner with a basis for determining if an abnormal health condition exists and if that condition is potentially disqualifying. Establishing minimum health requirements should aid in the more uniform and complete preparation of Form NRC-396 and should reduce instances when the NRC has to request additional medical information. However, it should be recognized that, although it is the licensed medical practitioner's responsibility to identify and evaluate potentially disqualifying physical conditions, the final determination of the applicant's medical qualification is made by the NRC.

Section 3.2 of ANSI N546-1976 requires that the facility operator forward to the designated medical examiner a report on each employee referred for a reactor operator medical examination prior to the examination. This section goes on to recommend that the report address such areas as work performance, attendance, and behavioral changes noted since the previous evaluation. It is recognized that the reporting of pertinent observations to a licensed medical practitioner by facility supervisory

¹Copies may be obtained from the American Nuclear Society, 555 North Kensington Avenue, La Grange Park, Illinois 60525.

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Comments and suggestions for improvements in these guides are encouraged at all times, and guides will be revised, as appropriate, to accommodate comments and to reflect new information or experience. This guide was revised as a result of substantive comments received from the public and additional staff review.

Comments should be sent to the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch.

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personnel can provide valuable background information to support the medical evaluation. However, there is a concern for potential abuse, in that observations by supervisory personnel may be biased and extend into areas not pertinent to the evaluation. In regard to the provisions of Section 3.2 of ANSI N546-1976, responsible facility supervisory personnel should determine from the licensed medical practitioner what information, including such items as those identified in Section 3.2, is needed to make the judgments required by Form NRC-396 and should forward only the information specified or requested. Information provided by the facility operator should be used only as background information and should be subject to evaluation.

Paragraph 55.11(a)(1) specifies, in part, that any mental or physical condition that might cause impaired judgment or motor coordination may constitute sufficient cause for denial of an operator license application. While ANSI N546-1976 addresses in some detail the physical conditions that may be cause for denial of an application, the standard is more general in identifying the mental conditions that may be cause for denial. Because of inherent difficulties in evaluating mental conditions and because of the broad nature of potentially disqualifying mental conditions presented in ANSI N546-1976, potentially disqualifying mental conditions should be evaluated by a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or physician professionally trained to identify the condition.

None of the provisions of ANSI N546-1976 or this guide should be construed to mean that the reading habits, political or religious beliefs, or attitudes on social, economic, or political issues of an individual should be investigated or judged.

C. REGULATORY POSITION

The requirements contained in ANSI N546-1976, "Medical Certification and Monitoring of Personnel Requiring Operator Licenses for Nuclear Power Plants,"¹ provide an acceptable method for determining the medical qualifica-

tions of applicants for initial or renewal operator or senior operator licenses for nuclear power plants, subject to the following:

1. Section 3.2 of ANSI N546-1976 requires that the facility operator forward to the designated medical examiner a report on each employee referred for a reactor operator medical examination prior to the examination and that the report include information specified by the designated medical examiner. ANSI N546-1976 further presents recommendations as to what other type of information is to be addressed. The facility operator should determine from the licensed medical practitioner what information, including such items as those identified in Section 3.2 of the standard are needed to make the judgments required by Form NRC-396, "Certificate of Medical Examination," and should forward only the information specified or requested. Information submitted by the facility operator should be used only as background information and should be subject to evaluation.

2. If, in the medical evaluation of the reactor operator, there is an indication of a potentially disqualifying condition in areas such as those specified in Sections 5.3.8 and 5.4.15 of ANSI N546-1976, evaluation of the condition should be conducted by a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or physician professionally trained to identify and evaluate such conditions.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this section is to provide information to applicants and licensees regarding the staff's plans for utilizing this regulatory guide.

Except in those cases in which an acceptable alternative method for complying with specified portions of the Commission's regulations is proposed, the method described herein will be used in the evaluation of Form NRC-396, "Certificate of Medical Examination," submittals in connection with applications for initial or renewal operator or senior operator licenses received after June 1979.