

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title: BRIEFING ON STATUS OF OPERATOR LICENSING ACTIVITIES  
IN THE AREA OF REQUALIFICATION EXAMS

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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BRIEFING ON STATUS OF OPERATOR LICENSING ACTIVITIES  
IN THE AREA OF REQUALIFICATION EXAMS

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PUBLIC MEETING

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Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
One White Flint North  
Rockville, Maryland

Wednesday, May 10, 1989

The Commission met in open session, pursuant to notice, at 2:00 p.m., the Honorable LANDO W. ZECH, JR., Chairman of the Commission, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- LANDO W. ZECH, JR., Chairman of the Commission
- THOMAS M. ROBERTS, Member of the Commission
- JAMES R. CURTISS, Member of the Commission

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STAFF AND PRESENTERS SEATED AT THE COMMISSION TABLE:

SAMUEL J. CHILK, Secretary

STUART TREBY, General Counsel's Office

VICTOR STELLO, JR., Executive Director for  
Operations

JACK ROE, Director, DLPQ, NRR

KENNETH E. PERKINS, JR., Chief, OPLB, DLPQ, NRR

RALPH COOLEY, Chief, RSOS, DLPQ, NRR

FRED MIRAGLIA, NRR

P R O C E E D I N G S

(2:01 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Good afternoon, ladies and  
4 gentlemen.

5 Commissioners Carr and Rogers will not be with  
6 us today.

7 This afternoon the staff will brief the  
8 Commission on the status of implementation of the  
9 operator requalification examination program.

10 After a September 10th, 1987 public meeting  
11 between the NRC staff and the industry representatives,  
12 the staff decided to suspend further NRC involvement in  
13 the administration of requalification examinations for  
14 NRC licensed reactor operators.

15 This decision was made to assure that there was  
16 no adverse impact on the safety of licensed power  
17 reactors as a result of the NRC requalification  
18 examination process.

19 The staff has worked to improve the  
20 requalification examination process, and demonstrated its  
21 effectiveness by conducting pilot requalification  
22 programs at five utilities, which they briefed the  
23 Commission on in December of 1988.

24 The staff has now conducted requalification  
25 examinations at a number of plants, and will inform us

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1 this afternoon of the results of the program to-date.

2 Copies of the slide presentation should be  
3 available at the entrance to the meeting room.

4 Do my fellow Commissioners have any opening  
5 comments to make?

6 (No response.)

7 If not, Mr. Stello, you may proceed.

8 MR. STELLO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 In the way of a general observation, I think  
10 the overall training of the operating people over the  
11 past ten years has improved significantly, and that was  
12 summarized this morning in the Commission's briefing by  
13 the industry. I think, in my judgment, a great deal of  
14 the credit for the improvement we've seen in the nuclear  
15 plants directly ties back to the adequacy of the  
16 training, especially of the operators.

17 One particular part of that training leads, of  
18 course, to two times when they're tested -- one when they  
19 get their initial exams, which we think has been going  
20 along very well and we've not had significant problems,  
21 although I think there's clearly room for improvement  
22 there, but we, as you had indicated, found significant  
23 problems in terms of administering requal exams and, as  
24 you point out, we did suspend it.

25 We went out to try to understand the problem as

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1 best we can. We had some public meetings, and in a  
2 moment Jack Roe will summarize this in more detail, but I  
3 would look at the experience we've had with it and I--  
4 in seeing the regulatory problem, hitting it head-on,  
5 making the changes that were necessary, I think we have,  
6 again, come a long way in demonstrating the willingness  
7 of the regulators to go out, when we're off on a tangent  
8 and we ought not to be, to be willing to change our  
9 course and do the right thing, and I think we have.

10 And I think the overall feedback that I've  
11 heard from the industry now has been very, very positive.  
12 So, I think we've gotten the requal program running now  
13 reasonably well.

14 I'll ask Jack Roe to give you a more  
15 comprehensive picture and snapshot of the background  
16 because I think it is important -- has a very important  
17 lesson to how we can regulate better when we have a  
18 problem, and deal with it quickly and efficiently.

19 Jack?

20 MR. ROE: The Commission requested a briefing  
21 on our new requalification program after it was running  
22 smoothly. I'm pleased to report to you that we have  
23 fully implemented our new requal program and, indeed, it  
24 is running very smoothly.

25 Late in '88 we briefed the Commission on our

1 current approach, which corrected the problems that Mr.  
2 Stello has spoken of. At that time, we had conducted the  
3 five pilot programs, and we had made some revisions based  
4 on what we learned in the pilot programs, and implemented  
5 our new requal program in October of '88.

6 Recently, the staff has sent to the Commission  
7 two papers on alternatives to our requalification  
8 program, which makes further refinements in the way that  
9 we conduct it. We will make the changes based on the  
10 guidance from the Commission, after you have an  
11 opportunity to address those.

12 Ken Perkins is Chief of our Operator Licensing  
13 Branch, will discuss the status of our current program.

14 Ken?

15 MR. PERKINS: Thank you.

16 As we begin to talk about the status of the  
17 requal program, I'd like to refresh your memories on the  
18 composition of the requal program. Recall that it is a  
19 four-part examination that we administer at the sites.

20 The first part is a dynamic simulator  
21 examination in which we focus on crew performance as well  
22 as individual performance, individual weaknesses. We  
23 evaluate the time critical and team dependent behavior  
24 during the simulator scenario runs.

25 The critical tasks to plant safety that are

1 contained in each of the scenarios then, provide us with  
2 a basis for evaluating the satisfactory performance of  
3 the individuals and the teams.

4           The second part of the operating exam is the  
5 walkthrough part. And in the walkthrough exam, we assure  
6 proficiency of individuals and plant systems which are  
7 important to safety. We emphasize the requalification  
8 subjects, the subjects out of their requalification  
9 programs, as well as recent licensee and industry  
10 experience, and probability risk assessments.

11           We utilize job performance measures to  
12 determine satisfactory performance of individuals during  
13 these walkthrough examinations.

14           In the written exam, which is all open  
15 reference, we conduct a portion of that in the static  
16 simulator and, in the static simulator, we evaluate the  
17 individual's knowledge of plant systems, integrated  
18 operations, instrumentation and controls, technical  
19 specifications, and limited conditions of operation.

20           In the classroom portion of the written exam--  
21 again, remember that this is open reference -- we  
22 evaluate the individual's ability to analyze conditions  
23 and to determine proper procedures and administrative  
24 practices.

25           So, these are the four sections of the exam as

1 we've been administering them.

2           If I may have the first slide, please. (Slide)  
3 I'd like to now discuss with you a summary of the requal  
4 program status since implementation -- that is, since we  
5 began implementing the program October of 1988, about  
6 seven months ago.

7           I'd first like to say that the start has been a  
8 little slow. The number of facilities' exams in the  
9 first few months was somewhat below our projection, but  
10 that the number of exams that we have been administering  
11 have been picking up in the last three months. We're now  
12 within 60 percent of our projected level of examination,  
13 and we expect to meet our examination projection for the  
14 year, by the end of the fiscal year.

15           There are 12 facility programs which we have  
16 evaluated to-date. Two of those final evaluations are  
17 still pending. Two of the 12 have been found  
18 unsatisfactory.

19           We have found no significant problems with the  
20 NRC requalification program implementation. In fact, the  
21 NRC's requalification program is identifying problems  
22 with facility programs, as well as with individuals who  
23 need remedial training.

24           Next slide, please. (Slide) The facilities at  
25 which we have conducted requalifications examinations and

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1 where we have evaluated the facilities' programs are  
2 listed on this slide. The two facilities for which the  
3 results are still pending are Braidwood and Palisades.  
4 The Braidwood exam is still being graded. The Palisades  
5 exam has been graded, but in order to complete a program  
6 evaluation, we must have a minimum sample of 12  
7 examinations, and we did not have the full 12 at  
8 Palisades.

9 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Which are the two that were  
10 unsat?

11 MR. PERKINS: The two programs that were  
12 unsatisfactory are Turkey Point and Point Beach.

13 COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: Point Beach was  
14 unsatisfactory?

15 MR. PERKINS: Yes. If there are questions, we  
16 can speak to that a little later.

17 COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: What was the basis for  
18 selecting these 12?

19 MR. PERKINS: It depends on the -- we intend to  
20 get to all facilities.

21 COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: I understand.

22 MR. PERKINS: It was based on the facilities'  
23 training cycle schedule and our -- and their availability  
24 in order to conduct these examinations.

25 CHAIRMAN ZECH: I might say that it's

1 disappointing to hear that Turkey Point was unsat. This  
2 kind of indicates a continuing problem with Turkey Point.  
3 I'm kind of tired of seeing Turkey Point on the bottom of  
4 our list, and so forth, and all the attention the staff's  
5 given it, and the region's given it the past few years.  
6 It's very disappointing. What were the results of that  
7 unsat? Can you give us just a little bit on that before  
8 we move on?

9 MR. PERKINS: Certainly. There were 24 people  
10 -- 24 individuals examined at Turkey Point. The criteria  
11 that we have set up in our exam --

12 CHAIRMAN ZECH: This is by our own people, by  
13 NRC?

14 MR. PERKINS: By NRC.

15 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Our new requalification  
16 program.

17 MR. PERKINS: Examined by NRC and the facility  
18 evaluators. So, it was co-graded.

19 CHAIRMAN ZECH: But the requalification program  
20 -- just to refresh my memory -- this is the one that the  
21 industry worked with us on this program --

22 MR. PERKINS: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN ZECH: -- and contributed  
24 significantly to the new program, so this is the one that  
25 they also recognize as a valid, good requalification

1 program, is that correct?

2 MR. PERKINS: I'm stealing my own thunder for a  
3 later slide, but, yes, both Point Beach and Turkey Point  
4 have told us that they thought that the exam was a good,  
5 fair, operationally-oriented examination.

6 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Well, we can go on then. Thank  
7 you. Tell us some more about Turkey Point, though; why  
8 did they do so poorly.

9 COMMISSIONER CURTISS: Just a quick question  
10 while we're on that point. What do we do when a program  
11 is unsatisfactory?

12 MR. PERKINS: Okay. A facility -- we have  
13 criteria in the examiner standards that we use to  
14 determine when a program is unsatisfactory. It can be on  
15 the basis of the percentage of individuals examined that  
16 fail the exam. In other words, if less than 75 percent  
17 of the people pass, this is a reflection on the program,  
18 and they may have an unsatisfactory program.

19 If a certain number of crews, certain  
20 percentage of the crews that we examine fail, then their  
21 program may be found unsat. If a certain number of their  
22 evaluators are found unsat, then the program may be found  
23 unsatisfactory. So, there are a longer list of criteria  
24 that are considered.

25 The facility, once the program has -- the

1 individual who fails the exam is removed from shift and  
2 put into remedial training. The facility's program, when  
3 it is found to be unsat, no longer has the authority or  
4 the power to re-examine that individual and return them  
5 to shift. If it was a satisfactory program, we allow the  
6 facility to re-examine the individual and return them to  
7 shift, knowing that we will come back and conduct another  
8 exam prior to renewing their license. With an unsat  
9 program, that power does not exist.

10 Also, there is a case-by-case determination by  
11 the regional administrator working in conjunction with  
12 ourselves and his staff, on whether or not that facility  
13 should continue to operate. And the number of  
14 individuals in whom we have confidence as operators to  
15 operate that plant, to constitute the required number of  
16 shifts, is one factor, but SALP ratings and other factors  
17 go into that determination.

18 COMMISSIONER CURTISS: What if a crew fails the  
19 test, what happens?

20 MR. PERKINS: If a crew fails the shift, they  
21 are taken -- if a crew fails the exam, they are taken  
22 off-shift and must receive remedial training prior to  
23 being returned to shift.

24 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Can you tell us just briefly a  
25 little bit more about Turkey Point, before we move on

1 then?

2 MR. PERKINS: Okay. There were a total of 24  
3 individuals who took the examination. Of those, 12 were  
4 on-shift personnel and 12 were off-shift personnel. By  
5 off-shift, I mean staff licensed individuals.

6 The number of on-shift personnel who failed the  
7 exam was four. The number of off-shift personnel who  
8 failed the exam was eight. The failures that occurred  
9 were across all three parts of the examination -- the  
10 written exam, the walkthrough, and the simulator, the  
11 dynamic simulator part of the exam.

12 Those individuals were taken off-shift and have  
13 been put into a remedial training program. And as I  
14 believe you are aware, the facility shut down in order to  
15 provide training to those individuals who continue to  
16 have active licenses, so that they could provide crew  
17 performance training to those people prior to restarting.

18 We conducted operational assessments which are  
19 like the dynamic simulator part of the exam, on those  
20 crews.

21 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Do we consider their program  
22 satisfactory?

23 MR. PERKINS: No, we do not. We consider their  
24 program as unsatisfactory.

25 CHAIRMAN ZECH: The whole program is

1 unsatisfactory at Turkey Point?

2 MR. PERKINS: Their requalifications program is  
3 unsatisfactory at this point, and there is going to be a  
4 meeting in<sup>4</sup> Region III on Monday, the 15th, to discuss  
5 their plan for correcting their program.

6 CHAIRMAN ZECH: What's the operational status  
7 of the plant?

8 MR. PERKINS: The operational status of the  
9 plant is that they have returned -- we have conducted our  
10 operational assessment and determined that the four  
11 crews, after --

12 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Qualified operators.

13 MR. PERKINS: -- of qualified operators, are  
14 satisfactorily qualified to operate the facility. This  
15 was a determination made about a week ago. It's my  
16 understanding that the facility has returned to -- has  
17 gone to hot stand-by today.

18 MR. MIRAGLIA: It's on its way.

19 CHAIRMAN ZECH: I presume we're monitoring that  
20 performance very closely, though, Region II, and perhaps  
21 headquarters. What do we do in that regard?

22 MR. MIRAGLIA: It's a joint -- the operational  
23 readiness that Ken alluded to was a joint evaluation by  
24 region and headquarters. We've had --

25 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Make a determination that they

1 could operate with those four shifts.

2 MR. MIRAGLIA: Yes, sir, and there's been some  
3 additional looking at the crews, concerns relative to  
4 both of the units. There's a meeting, as Ken indicated,  
5 to discuss the long-term plans, and region and  
6 headquarters will continue to watch that operation.

7 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Please do that; watch them  
8 closely.

9 MR. MIRAGLIA: Yes, sir.

10 MR. STELLO: I should add, Mr. Chairman, since  
11 this conversation thus far has a very, very negative  
12 tone, and perhaps somewhat justified, but on the other  
13 hand we have had intense interactions with this licensee,  
14 and they have made significant management changes at the  
15 plant, and the feedback --

16 CHAIRMAN ZECH: I know they've made changes --

17 MR. STELLO: -- the feedback we're getting,  
18 that the individuals that are coming there, are starting  
19 to make a difference, but we must be patient. It will  
20 take a long --

21 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Well, we've been patient a long  
22 time with Turkey Point, that's my point. The plans are  
23 good always. I've been down there. I've seen it. I  
24 remember when they told me about the improvement programs  
25 they had. I asked him why the others didn't work. I

1 didn't get a very good answer. They're all enthused  
2 about their new programs.

3 I recognize they've had management changes. I  
4 recognize the staff has done a very good job of watching  
5 them closely. They haven't performed very well. They  
6 have not implemented very well.

7 I expect to see results. I expect we deserve  
8 to see results. We should see results. So, all I'm  
9 saying is, watch them closely, and I hope that we'll see  
10 results soon because we should.

11 All right. Let's move along.

12 MR. PERKINS: All right. If I may have the  
13 next slide, please. (Slide) The results that we have to-  
14 date are presented on this slide. We have conducted  
15 since program implementation -- that's since this past  
16 October -- 149 individual license examinations.

17 Each of the three examination categories are  
18 broken out for you there. I will tell you that of the  
19 149, 119 individuals have passed the exams, which  
20 represents about 80 percent. In other words, there's  
21 about an 80-percent pass rate across all of the  
22 facilities that we have done to-date. Now, that includes  
23 Turkey Point and Point Beach.

24 If I remove Turkey Point and Point Beach, then  
25 the total pass rate is 89 percent. So, the point I'm

1 trying to make with you here is that the unsatisfactory  
2 programs do have a marked impact on the overall  
3 statistics for this program.

4 Also, at the bottom of the page, it reveals  
5 that we have examined or evaluated 37 crews. Of those,  
6 31 have passed -- that is 84 percent overall -- and 91  
7 percent of the facilities with satisfactory programs.

8 Next, I'd like to provide you with some  
9 observations with respect to the satisfactory programs.  
10 In general, the facilities' programs have been well  
11 prepared. Recognize that this is a first round with each  
12 facility, and this is a different type of examination  
13 than we have administered before, and so there has been  
14 some need for shepherding but, in general, the facilities  
15 are well prepared.

16 The examination is recognized to be a practical  
17 one versus academic questions. We believe that we're  
18 seeing good performance. That approximately 90 percent,  
19 or 89 percent, that I showed to you on the previous page,  
20 I think, is a good indicator that we're looking at the  
21 operational qualities of these operators.

22 A few generic -- very few generic problems have  
23 been identified. Some improvements have been identified  
24 that would help to tune the program. Several of the  
25 facilities have just made our minimum requirement with

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1 respect to having questions in their question banks, and  
2 job performance measures and scenarios, and they need to  
3 go on and develop additional material and refine the  
4 quality of that.

5           There's also some need to gain more experience  
6 on open reference question writing. There's a skill to  
7 writing open reference type questions, so that the  
8 candidate doesn't believe he has to look up every  
9 question.

10           That also relates to the last bullet on that  
11 page, and there is a certain amount of exam-taking  
12 technique involved in this exam, and that is because it's  
13 open reference, individuals sometimes feel that they  
14 should look up every answer. The exam is not designed  
15 that way. The open references are provided to see how  
16 the individuals use their references, and how familiar  
17 they are. Not every question is expected to be looked  
18 up.

19           With respect to the unsatisfactory programs, I  
20 mentioned to you before that we used the criteria  
21 contained in our examiner standards. The specific  
22 examiner standard is 601. We believe that the NRC  
23 program is effective in identifying facility program  
24 deficiencies.

25           Licensees have concurred in the validity of the

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1 exam. Both Point Beach and Turkey Point have made that  
2 comment. Point Beach did it in a public forum of about  
3 300 people.

4 We've also received an individual letter that  
5 -- where the individual stated that they thought the--  
6 that he thought that the exam was operationally-oriented  
7 and he got an operational benefit out of it when he  
8 returned to watch. It's an individual who had not passed  
9 the exam the first time around. I think that's  
10 remarkable.

11 With respect to the unsatisfactory programs,  
12 just to reiterate a little bit, when the program is  
13 unsatisfactory, the NRC must re-examine the operators  
14 before they can go back on-shift, as well as prior to  
15 their licenses being renewed.

16 In addition, the facility must describe the  
17 actions that it plans to take to remedy the program  
18 problems. And the NRC must, in subsequent examinations,  
19 evaluate an appropriate or a prescribed sample of that 12  
20 operators in order to re-establish that the facility's  
21 program is, in fact, satisfactory.

22 So, if we had an unsatisfactory program, we  
23 have to do 12 exams, or a sample of 12 people, to  
24 determine that the facility's program is, in fact,  
25 satisfactory.

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1           In summary, I'd like to report that I believe  
2 that the operational nature of the current requal program  
3 has corrected the problems previously identified by the  
4 industry and by ourselves.

5           I believe that the program is going well.  
6 There's still some additional opportunity for fine-tuning  
7 and improvement, but I believe overall the program is  
8 working very well.

9           We intend to continue with the program on its  
10 present course. With respect to the manner or the  
11 approach that we use in implementing it, the standards  
12 and the like, I do not anticipate changing, but as the  
13 Commission makes its decision on the alternatives paper,  
14 which is presently before you, we will modify the  
15 specifics on how we implement the program.

16           That concludes the prepared remarks that I had  
17 to present to you today.

18           MR. STELLO: We're through, Mr. Chairman, and  
19 ready for questions.

20           CHAIRMAN ZECH: All right. Thank you very  
21 much.

22           Commissioner Roberts?

23           COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: No.

24           CHAIRMAN ZECH: Commissioner Curtiss?

25           COMMISSIONER CURTISS: No, I don't have any

1 questions. I'm just -- I'm pleased to see that the  
2 shortcomings in the program around that final ruling, as  
3 to problems that I think existed, have been addressed. I  
4 think the staff's made good progress generally, on the  
5 programmatic issues that they focused on.

6 I, too, I guess, am disappointed in any  
7 instance where a licensee performs as badly as some of  
8 them apparently have, but I think that continued  
9 attention that the Chairman has alluded to, hard-hitting  
10 attention, is important, but I am pleased to see that the  
11 program generally is moving forward, and that the  
12 concerns have been resolved, and that you've worked  
13 carefully with those who have an interest in this  
14 program, to make sure that we're testing for the right  
15 things and in a fair and objective manner, and achieving,  
16 I think, a general improvement in this area. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN ZECH: What is the staff's schedule  
18 for implementation of the requalification program at the  
19 other facilities?

20 MR. PERKINS: For the remainder of this fiscal  
21 year, as I mentioned, we're looking at somewhat higher  
22 than our projected -- our initial projections. And for  
23 the remainder of this fiscal year, we expect to get to 22  
24 more facilities. That will bring us to a total of 36 in  
25 this fiscal year. And I should also mention, we can take

1 some credit for the five pilot exams, the five exams that  
2 we conducted at pilot facilities because the individuals  
3 that we examined there, and passed those exams, who had  
4 six-year licenses, have satisfied the exam requirement.

5 So, I suppose we could take credit by the end  
6 of this fiscal year, for having gotten to 41 facilities.

7 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Does the schedule you've just  
8 described and your projected schedule, permit us to get  
9 to the objective that we have for examining all the  
10 operators once every six years?

11 MR. PERKINS: We believe so; with good  
12 management and hard work, we'll be able to accomplish  
13 that, yes, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN ZECH: Very good. Well, I think  
15 you've done a fine job, and I'll tell you, it's a  
16 tremendous improvement from the requalification program  
17 of several years ago, there's no question about it.

18 I remember in my early plant visits, why, I  
19 almost consistently received complaints from the  
20 operators about the requalification program, and I think  
21 that this effort that you've undertaken jointly with the  
22 utility support, has really been something that we can  
23 all be proud of.

24 I think your comments that the acceptance of  
25 this program by the utilities -- and it's my

1 understanding that that has been accepted very well -- as  
2 appreciating the fact that the program is a valid  
3 program; it's a much better program. Now, that's very  
4 important.

5           So, let me thank you very much for a fine  
6 briefing. I thank all of you involved in this program.  
7 I think it's important that we, as independent  
8 regulators, do have confidence the operators that we're  
9 licensing continue to man a high level of technical  
10 competence and operational proficiency throughout their  
11 licensing tenure.

12           I'm disappointed to hear that Turkey Point is  
13 continuing to have problems. I might ask Mr. Stello,  
14 have you thought about a diagnostic examination, or some  
15 kind of an examination for Turkey Point, that would kind  
16 of look across the whole spectrum?

17           MR. STELLO: In our upcoming meeting, we're  
18 going to be looking at that plant very closely, and  
19 trying to sort out the types of changes they made -- are  
20 they right, or do we need to look to understand more.  
21 We'll be prepared to answer that question in June.

22           CHAIRMAN ZECH: All right. Fine. Thank you.  
23 I do think it's important because we've just focused on  
24 one aspect of it, the training, here today, but we all  
25 know that there have been other problems at Turkey Point.

1 So, I think the Commission would be very interested in  
2 hearing your views, after you've had a chance to discuss  
3 them with your senior management people. I know that  
4 meeting is going to take place next week, I believe.

5 MR. STELLO: Correct.

6 CHAIRMAN ZECH: So, perhaps when you come back  
7 to the Commission -- I believe it's in early June -- that  
8 you'll be able to give us your thoughts on this. It's a  
9 continuing concern, I think, to the Commission, and we'll  
10 look forward to your views on it.

11 I think it's also important that the methods  
12 that you use to judge competence in these requalification  
13 exams, and the proficiency that we assess from our  
14 operators in your examinations, is -- do we have the  
15 confidence it's a very valid assessment of the skills  
16 that are required for safety, and that's why I, for one,  
17 am so encouraged by the progress you've made in this area  
18 because this exam for these operators is a  
19 requalification exam. We know it's not the initial  
20 examination, but these are operators that are supposedly  
21 qualified.

22 They are operating our plants. We have reason  
23 to believe that they're doing so safely, but this check  
24 is very important, and I think we've upgraded the  
25 examination itself. You have obviously made it much more

1 professional, as I understand it, and much more on the  
2 level of what one might expect from qualified operators.

3 I appreciate the fact you're using simulators  
4 as well as oral and written examinations, too, and you're  
5 doing it with team concept and so forth. I think those  
6 are all good things because individual exams are  
7 important, but when they've been operating the plants for  
8 a while, it's important to know that they are using  
9 teamwork, they're working together, they communicate  
10 well, and they are respectful of those important parts of  
11 the operations.

12 So, I think that you have done an excellent job  
13 in revising this requalification program, and it's a  
14 terrifically important program. It does give us a check  
15 on whether those licenses we've issued are being  
16 respected, and whether the operators continue to keep  
17 updated on current operational incidents that happen,  
18 whether they're knowledgeable about their profession.  
19 So, I commend you for an excellent job that you've all  
20 done in this regard.

21 You've asked the Commission to give you some  
22 guidance in the paper, SECY 89-055, on this subject, in  
23 the conduct of NRC-administered requalification  
24 examinations, and I'm sure the Commission will be coming  
25 back to you in the very near future, on that matter.

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1 Do any of my fellow Commissioners have anything  
2 -- any other comments to make?

3 (No response.)

4 If not, thank you for an excellent  
5 presentation, and keep up the good work.

6 We stand adjourned.

7 (Whereupon, at 2:34 p.m., the meeting was  
8 adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

This is to certify that the attached events of a meeting  
of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission entitled:

TITLE OF MEETING: BRIEFING ON STATUS OF OPERATOR LICENSING ACTIVITIES  
IN THE AREA OF REQUALIFICATION EXAMS

PLACE OF MEETING: ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DATE OF MEETING: MAY 10, 1989

were transcribed by me. I further certify that said transcription  
is accurate and complete, to the best of my ability, and that the  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

OPERATOR REQUALIFICATION STATUS

PRESENTED BY:  
JACK ROE, DIRECTOR  
DIVISION OF LICENSEE PERFORMANCE  
AND QUALITY EVALUATION

KENNETH E. PERKINS, JR., CHIEF  
OPERATOR LICENSING BRANCH

## INTRODUCTION

- ° BACKGROUND
  - PROBLEMS WITH PREVIOUS PROGRAM
  - CORRECTIVE ACTION
  - PILOT PROGRAM
- ° STAFF PROPOSAL ON REQUAL ALTERNATIVES
- ° CURRENT PROGRAM STATUS

## REQUAL PROGRAM SUMMARY

- ° STATUS SINCE IMPLEMENTATION
- ° 12 FACILITY PROGRAMS EVALUATED
- ° 2 PROGRAMS FOUND UNSAT
- ° 2 PROGRAM RESULTS PENDING
- ° NO SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS WITH PROGRAM

PLANTS EVALUATED

FORT CALHOUN	TURKEY POINT
INDIAN POINT 2	LIMERICK
BEAVER VALLEY 1	PALISADES*
BRAIDWOOD*	SUMMER
MONTICELLO	SUSQUEHANNA
POINT BEACH	PALO VERDE

\*RESULTS PENDING

REQUAL PROGRAM SUMMARY

<u>EXAM</u>	<u>ADMIN</u>	<u>PASSED</u>	<u>PERCENT</u> (TOTAL)	<u>PERCENT</u> (SAT PROG ONLY)
WRITTEN:	149	129	87%	94%
ORAL:	149	144	97%	100%
SIMULATOR:	149	134	90%	93%
CREW EVALS:	37	31	84%	91%

## SATISFACTORY PROGRAMS

- ° WELL PREPARED
- ° PRACTICAL VERSUS ACADEMIC QUESTIONS
- ° GOOD PERFORMANCE (APPROX. 90% PASS)
- ° FEW GENERIC PROBLEMS
- ° SOME IMPROVEMENT NECESSARY
  - JOB PERFORMANCE MEASURE QUESTIONS
  - OPEN REFERENCE QUESTIONS
  - EXAM-TAKING TECHNIQUES

## UNSATISFACTORY PROGRAMS

- ° PROGRAM EFFECTIVE IN IDENTIFYING DEFICIENCIES
- ° LICENSEES CONCURRED IN VALIDITY OF EXAM

## SUMMARY

- ° PREVIOUS PROBLEMS CORRECTED
- ° PROGRAM GOING WELL
- ° CONTINUE PROGRAM
- ° MODIFY IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMISSION  
DIRECTION