

## **Operator Licensing Program**

### **Key Messages**

- The Operator Licensing Program continues to ensure that only well-trained, properly qualified, and competent individuals are licensed as operators and senior operators at nuclear power plants. .
- The program continues to ensure that holders of operator and senior operator licenses maintain their qualifications, competence, and medical fitness via license renewal and inspection of facility-administered licensed operator requalification programs..
- The program proactively maintains communications on issues of concern, both internally with the NRC Regional Offices and the NRC's Office of New Reactors, and externally with the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) and the Nuclear Energy Institute's (NEI) Licensed Operator Focus Group (LOFG).

### **Facts**

- The NRC staff administered 43 site-specific examinations to 502 applicants at commercial nuclear power plants in FY 2016, where approximately 93 percent of the examinations were prepared by facility licensees..
- The overall NRC licensing examination pass rates in FY 2016 were approximately 95 percent and 94 percent for reactor operator and senior reactor operator applicants, respectively. .
- The NRC conducted licensed operator requalification inspections at approximately 45 percent of power reactors in FY 2016, consistent with a 2-year inspection frequency. Approximately 2625 inspection hours were used, with an average of 94 inspection hours per plant inspected. Nine findings/violations were identified in FY 2016 associated with control room simulator fidelity, quality of requalification examinations, requalification examination security, and inadequate plant procedures.

### **Background**

- 10 CFR Part 55 contains requirements for licensing of reactor operators and senior reactor operators at power and non-power reactor facilities. It includes requirements for medical examination and certification, the application process, written examinations and operating tests, simulation facilities, and issuance of licenses. Additionally, it includes requirements for requalification and renewal of licenses.
- The NRC implements the Operator Licensing process through NUREG-1021, Revision 10, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," and NUREG 1478, Revision 2, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Research and Test Reactors."
- The NRC conducts licensed operator requalification program inspections in accordance with Inspection Procedure 71111.11, "Licensed Operator Requalification Program and Licensed Operator Performance."

## **Current Status**

The staff continues to support the following efforts:

- Reviewing, developing, and conducting operator licensing examinations at power and test reactors.
- Conducting licensed operator requalification inspections.
- Developing and maintaining NRC examiner resources for current and new reactors.
- Implementing recommendations from the NRC's Operator Licensing Lessons Learned Review Team. This effort includes a proposed new revision to NUREG-1021, which was in the final stage of approval at the end of FY 2016.
- Maintaining communications on operator licensing issues with both internal and external stakeholders.
- International engagement on operator licensing issues, including hosting visitors from the NRC's Korean counterpart, Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety, and leading efforts at the International Atomic Energy Agency to develop an international standard on severe accident management.

## **Next Steps**

- Publish Revision 11 of NUREG-1021.
- Continue efforts to allow for the electronic submission of licensing information for individuals who apply for an initial or renewed reactor operator or senior reactor operator license.
- Publish a Revision to the PWR and BWR Knowledge and Abilities Catalogs (NUREGs-1122/1123) for the current fleet of power reactors.

## **Industry Issues**

- The NEI LOFG expressed concerns with the grading changes to the simulator portion of the initial licensed operator operating test. NRC staff and industry participated in a Commission briefing on the status of the Operator Licensing Program to address, in part, these concerns.
- The NEI LOFG continues to engage the staff regarding concerns with the reduction in the GFEs offerings from four to two examinations per year.