



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
475 ALLENDALE ROAD
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-1415

December 3, 1996

Mr. Robert G. Byram
Senior Vice President - Nuclear
Pennsylvania Power & Light Company
2 North Ninth Street
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

SUBJECT: INITIAL OPERATOR EXAMINATION REPORTS 50-387/96-12 (OL),
50-388/96-12 (OL)

Dear Mr. Byram:

This report transmits the findings of the initial operator license examinations conducted by NRC examiners in the period of October 21 - 24, 1996, at the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station. At the conclusion of the examinations, Ms. T. Walker discussed the examination observations with Mr. T. Markowski and other members of your staff.

Two reactor operator applicants passed all portions of the examination and were subsequently issued licenses. Three senior reactor operator (SRO) applicants did not pass the written examination, including one SRO applicant who also did not pass the simulator portion of the operating examination.

Your development and review of the written examinations was weak. A significant number of technical errors were identified during your review following administration of the examinations. We are concerned about the quality of your examination development process and would appreciate your analysis of the root causes of why so many post-examination changes were required and what actions will be taken to improve the quality of future license examinations. In addition, both recent operator license examinations have resulted in applicant failures. Although only twelve applicants were examined, five failures occurred. This represents a relatively high failure rate. We would appreciate your conclusions on what the examination results indicate regarding the applicants' abilities and the license applicant training program. Please inform me of how you would like to communicate your conclusions, either in a written submittal or at a meeting.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

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Mr. Robert G. Byram

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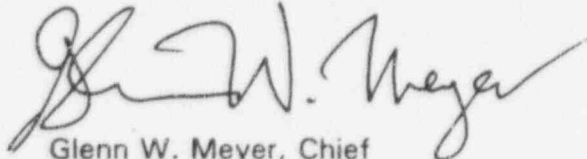
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Mr. Robert G. Byram

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A response is requested concerning your review of the written examinations and conclusions on the meaning of the recent high applicant failure rate within 60 days of receipt of this letter. Should you have any questions regarding this examination, please contact me at (610) 337-5211.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Glenn W. Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Glenn" and last name "Meyer" being the most prominent parts.

Glenn W. Meyer, Chief
Operator Licensing and
Human Performance Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket Nos. 50-387 and 50-388

Enclosure: NRC Region I Combined Examination Inspection Report 50-387/96-12 (OL)
50-388/96-12 (OL) w/Attachments 1-5

cc w/encl; w/o Attachments 1-5:

G. T. Jones, Vice President - Nuclear Engineering
G. Kuczynski, Plant Manager
J. M. Kenny, Supervisor, Nuclear Licensing
G. D. Miller, Manager - Nuclear Engineering
R. R. Wehry, Nuclear Licensing
M. M. Urioste, Nuclear Services Manager, General Electric
C. D. Lopes, Manager - Nuclear Security
W. Burchill, Manager, Nuclear Safety Assessment
H. D. Woodeshick, Special Office of the President
J. C. Tilton, III, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

cc w/encl and Attachments 1-5:

A. Fitch, Nuclear Operations Training Supervisor
B. Stitt, Nuclear Operations Training Supervisor
W. Lowthert, Manager, Nuclear Training
M. Parrish, Nuclear Operations Training Specialist