



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**
REGION IV
1600 EAST LAMAR BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4511

September 15, 2020

Mr. John Dent, Jr.
Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer
Nebraska Public Power District
Cooper Nuclear Station
72676 648A Avenue
P.O. Box 98
Brownville, NE 68321

SUBJECT: COOPER NUCLEAR STATION - NRC EXAMINATION
REPORT 05000298/2020301

Dear Mr. Dent:

On August 18, 2020, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) completed an initial operator license examination at Cooper Nuclear Station. The enclosed report documents the examination results and licensing decisions. The preliminary examination results were discussed on July 29, 2020, with Mr. K. Dia, General Manager, Plant Operations, and other members of your staff. A telephonic exit meeting was conducted on August 18, 2020, with Mr. K. Dia, who was provided the NRC licensing decisions.

The examination included the evaluation of three applicants for reactor operator licenses and two applicants for upgrade senior reactor operator license. The license examiners determined that all applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued. There were no post-examination comments submitted by your staff. The enclosure contains details of this report.

No findings were identified during this examination.

This letter, its enclosure, and your response (if any) will be made available for public inspection and copying at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> and at the NRC Public Document Room in accordance with 10 CFR 2.390, "Public Inspections, Exemptions, Requests for Withholding."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory E. Werner".

Gregory E. Werner, Chief
Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket No. 05000298
License No. DPR-46

Enclosure:
Examination Report 05000298/2020301
w/attachment: Supplemental Information

cc w/ encl: Distribution via LISTSERV®

COOPER NUCLEAR STATION - NRC EXAMINATION REPORT 05000298/2020301 -
September 15, 2020

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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Inspection Report

Docket Number: 05000298

License Number: DPR-46

Report Number: 05000298/2020301

Enterprise Identifier: L-2020-OLL-0013

Licensee: Nebraska Public Power District

Facility: Cooper Nuclear Station

Location: Brownville, Nebraska

Inspection Dates: July 27, 2020, to August 18, 2020

Inspectors: T. Farina, Senior Operations Engineer (Chief Examiner)
J. Kirkland, Senior Operations Engineer
M. Hayes, Operations Engineer

Approved By: Gregory E. Werner
Chief, Operations Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Enclosure

SUMMARY

ER 05000298/2020301; July 27, 2020, to August 18, 2020; Cooper Nuclear Station; Initial Operator Licensing Examination Report

The NRC examiners evaluated the competency of three applicants for reactor operator licenses and two applicants for upgrade senior reactor operator licenses at Cooper Nuclear Station.

The licensee developed the examinations using NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," Revision 11. The written examination was administered by the licensee on August 4, 2020. The NRC examiners administered the operating tests on July 27-29, 2020.

The NRC examiners determined that all applicants satisfied the requirements of 10 CFR Part 55, and the appropriate licenses have been issued.

A. NRC-Identified and Self-Revealing Findings

None.

B. Licensee-Identified Violations

None.

REPORT DETAILS

OTHER ACTIVITIES – INITIAL LICENSE EXAM

.1 License Applications

a. Scope

The NRC examiners reviewed all license applications submitted to ensure each applicant satisfied relevant license eligibility requirements. The NRC examiners also audited two of the license applications in detail to confirm that they accurately reflected the subject applicant's qualifications. This audit focused on the applicants' experience and on-the-job training, including control manipulations that provided significant reactivity changes.

b. Findings

No findings were identified.

.2 Examination Development

a. Scope

The NRC examiners reviewed integrated examination outlines and draft examinations submitted by the licensee against the requirements of NUREG-1021. The NRC examiners conducted an onsite validation of the operating tests.

b. Findings

The NRC examiners provided outline, draft examination, and post-validation comments to the licensee. The licensee satisfactorily completed comment resolution prior to examination administration.

The NRC examiners determined the written examinations and operating tests initially submitted by the licensee were within the range of acceptability expected for a proposed examination.

.3 Operator Knowledge and Performance

a. Scope

On August 4, 2020, the licensee proctored the administration of the written examinations to all five applicants. The licensee staff graded the written examinations, analyzed the results, and presented their analysis to the NRC on August 13, 2020.

The NRC examination team administered the various portions of the operating tests to all applicants on July 27-29, 2020.

b. Findings

No findings were identified.

All applicants passed the written examination and all parts of the operating tests. The final written examinations and post-examination analysis may be accessed in the ADAMS system under the accession numbers noted in the attachment. There were no post-examination comments as indicated in the licensee submittal.

The examination team noted three generic weaknesses associated with applicant performance on the walkthrough portion of the operating test.

- Two applicants did not initially recognize that reactor building floor drain sump level was greater than max safe operating water level (MSOWL) when procedurally directed to verify.
- Two applicants did not immediately recognize reactor scram criteria were met with two control rods drifting in.
- Two applicants could not properly interpret a semi-log graph for projected drywell Curie content vs effective age.

Post-examination analysis revealed three generic weaknesses associated with applicant performance on the written examination.

- Three applicants did not understand the impact of a group 2 isolation when residual heat removal was intertwined with fuel pool cooling.
- Three applicants did not understand what the lowest value of torus level would not require entry into TS 3.6.2.2, Suppression Pool Water Level.
- Three applicants did not understand what systems must be declared inoperable on a loss of 250 VDC bus 1B, and the associated completion time for TS 3.8.7, Distribution Systems – Operating.

Copies of all individual examination reports were sent to the facility training manager for evaluation and determination of appropriate remedial training. These deficiencies were captured in the licensee's corrective action program as Condition Reports CNS-2020-03322.

.4 Simulation Facility Performance

a. Scope

The NRC examiners observed simulator performance with regard to plant fidelity during examination validation and administration.

b. Findings

No findings were identified.

.5 Examination Security

a. Scope

The NRC examiners reviewed examination security for examination development during both the onsite preparation week and examination administration week for compliance with 10 CFR 55.49 and NUREG-1021. Plans for examination security and applicant control were reviewed and discussed with licensee personnel.

b. Findings

No findings were identified.

EXIT MEETINGS AND DEBRIEFS

Exit Meeting Summary

The chief examiner presented the preliminary examination results to Mr. K. Dia, General Manager, Plant Operations, and other members of the staff on July 29, 2020. A telephonic exit was conducted on August 18, 2020, between Mr. T. Farina, chief examiner, and Mr. K. Dia. The licensee did not identify any information or materials used during the examination as proprietary.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

Licensee Personnel

M. Joe, Training Manager

J. Florence, Simulator and Training Support Superintendent

NRC Personnel

A. Siwy, Senior Resident Inspector

ADAMS DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

Accession No. ML20241A248 - FINAL WRITTEN EXAMS

Accession No. ML20241A249 - FINAL OPERATING TEST

Accession No. ML20241A250 - POST-EXAMINATION ANALYSIS