

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

August 24, 2005

**NRC REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY 2005-19
PREPARATION AND SCHEDULING OF
OPERATOR LICENSING EXAMINATIONS**

ADDRESSEES

All holders of operating licenses for nuclear power reactors, except those who have permanently ceased operations and have certified that fuel has been permanently removed from the reactor vessel.

INTENT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing this regulatory issue summary (RIS) to inform addressees of the NRC staff's need for updated information on projected site-specific operator licensing examination schedules and the estimated numbers of applicants planning to take operator licensing examinations and the NRC's generic fundamentals examinations (GFEs). This information will help the NRC to more effectively utilize its resources. This RIS requires no action or written response on the part of addressees. Addressee actions to collect and transmit the information noted herein are strictly voluntary.

BACKGROUND

On April 23, 1999, the NRC published a notice in the *Federal Register* (64 FR 19868) amending 10 CFR Part 55, "Operators' Licenses," to allow nuclear power facility licensees to prepare, proctor, and grade the written examinations required by 10 CFR 55.41 and 55.43 provided that certain conditions are satisfied. The amendment also allows facility licensees to prepare the NRC-administered operating tests required by 10 CFR 55.45. Pursuant to 10 CFR 55.40(c), facility licensees that choose not to prepare their own examinations and operating tests must request in writing that the NRC prepare the examination and the operating tests.

Regulatory Information Summary (RIS) 2004-10, "Preparation and Scheduling of Operator Licensing Examinations," issued June 14, 2004, asked facility licensees to submit proposed schedules of examinations that they intended to prepare and estimate the number of applicants to be tested in site examinations and GFEs in calendar years (CYs) 2005 through 2008. This RIS supercedes RIS 2004-10. The objective is to update examination schedules and applicant estimates for CYs 2006 through 2008 and add an estimate for CY 2009.

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SUMMARY OF ISSUE

The NRC uses about twice as many resources to prepare an examination as to review, approve, administer, and document a facility-prepared examination. The number of examinations administered by licensees fluctuates from year to year. Consequently, the NRC has found it helpful to request an annual update of power reactor facility licensees' initial operator licensing examination needs. The update should include an estimate of the number of applicants to be examined and whether the licensee or the NRC will prepare the exam. This information will help the NRC budget its resources. The NRC regional offices will continue to coordinate specific examination dates with the training managers of affected facility licensees.

The NRC is requesting that each licensee provide the following information on NRC Form 536, "Operator Licensing Examination Data" (attached):

A. Proposed Examination Preparation Schedule

Estimate the number of examinations you intend to prepare and the number of examinations you will request the NRC to prepare during CYs 2006 through 2009. For examinations that are prepared by facility licensees, the NRC will assume that each examination includes the required outline, the written examination, and the operating test unless otherwise specified (joint NRC/licensee examination development is permitted and should be coordinated with the NRC regional office).

B. Initial Operator License Examinations

For each desired examination, estimate the number of applicants to be tested and enter the proposed primary and alternate dates of examination. If you are requesting more than one examination per calendar year, split the applicable column or use additional forms as necessary to cover all the examinations through CY 2009.

C. Proposed Generic Fundamentals Examination Schedule

Estimate by examination month the number of applicants who plan to take the GFE in CYs 2006 and 2007. As requested by the industry, the GFE is now administered four times a year.

VOLUNTARY RESPONSE

Addressees that choose to submit the information requested in NRC Form 536 are asked to do so within 30 days of receiving this RIS. NRC Form 536 is available on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/forms/>. Your response should be directed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Document Control Desk, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and a copy of the response should be sent to the applicable regional office. RIS responses may be submitted electronically.

BACKFIT DISCUSSION

This RIS requires no action or written response. Any action on the part of addressees to collect and transmit operator licensing examination data in accordance with the guidance contained in this RIS is strictly voluntary and, therefore, is not a backfit under 10 CFR 50.109. Consequently, the staff did not perform a backfit analysis.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTIFICATION

A notice of opportunity for public comment on this RIS was not published in the *Federal Register* because it pertains to an administrative aspect of the regulatory process that involves the voluntary submission of information on the part of addressees.

SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT FAIRNESS ACT OF 1966

The NRC has determined that this action is not subject to the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

This RIS concerns a voluntary information collection that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). This voluntary information collection is covered by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance no. 3150-0131, which expires on August 31, 2008.

The public reporting burden for this voluntary information collection on NRC Form 536 is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. Send comments on any aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Records and FOIA/Privacy Services Branch (T-F52), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by Internet electronic mail to infocollects@nrc.gov; and to the Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOB-10202 (3150-0131), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

Public Protection Notification

The NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless the requesting document displays a currently valid OMB control number.

CONTACT

Please direct any questions about this matter to the technical contact(s) or the Lead Project Manager listed below, or to the appropriate Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) project manager.

/RA/

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Attachment: NRC Form 536, "Operator Licensing Examination Data"

Note: NRC generic communications may be found on the NRC public website, <http://www.nrc.gov>, under Electronic Reading Room/Document Collections.

NRC FORM 536 (8-2005)	U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION	APPROVED BY OMB: NO. 3150-0131	EXPIRES: 08/31/2008 <small>Estimated burden per response to comply with this voluntary information collection request 1 hour. This information collection is used to plan budgets and resources for operator examinations. Send comments regarding burden estimate to the Records and FOIA/Privacy Services Branch (1-5 F53), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by internet e-mail to info@nrc.gov, and to the Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOB-10202, (3150-0131), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. If a means used to impose an information collection does not display a currently valid OMB control number, the NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, the information collection.</small>
OPERATOR LICENSING EXAMINATION DATA			

FACILITY	NRC REGION
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A. PROPOSED EXAMINATION PREPARATION SCHEDULE

PROPOSED NUMBER	CY ____	CY ____	CY ____	CY ____
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LICENSEE-PREPARED EXAMINATIONS				
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF NRC-PREPARED EXAMINATIONS				

B. INITIAL OPERATOR LICENSE EXAMINATIONS

PROPOSED NUMBER	CY ____	CY ____	CY ____	CY ____
NUMBER OF REACTOR OPERATORS				
NUMBER OF SENIOR REACTOR OPERATORS - INSTANT				
NUMBER OF SENIOR REACTOR OPERATORS - UPGRADE				
NUMBER OF SENIOR REACTOR OPERATORS - LIMITED				
PROPOSED DATES				
PRIMARY DATE				
ALTERNATE DATE				

C. PROPOSED GENERIC FUNDAMENTALS EXAMINATION (GFE) SCHEDULE

PROPOSED NUMBER	CY ____				CY ____			
	MARCH	JUNE	SEPTEMBER	DECEMBER	MARCH	JUNE	SEPTEMBER	DECEMBER
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CANDIDATES								