

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

June 6, 2002

**NRC REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY 2002-09  
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 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 plan the use of its resources. This RIS requires no specific action or written response on the part of addressees. Any action on the part of addressees to collect and transmit the information noted herein is 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 their own, NRC-approved written examinations and prepare the NRC-administered operating tests. However, facility licensees that elect not to prepare their own examinations and operating tests must request in writing, pursuant to 10 CFR 55.40(c), that the examination and operating tests be prepared by the NRC.

Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) 2001-17, "Preparation and Scheduling of Operator Licensing Examinations," issued August 22, 2001, requested that facility licensees submit proposed schedules of examinations that they intended to prepare and to estimate the number of applicants to be tested in both site examinations and GFEs in calendar years (CYs) 2002 through 2005. This RIS supercedes RIS 2001-17; the objective is to update examination schedules and applicant estimates for CYs 2003 through 2006.

**ML021570110**

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUE**

Facility-developed and NRC-developed examinations require significantly different resource commitments on the part of the NRC. Experience has shown that the NRC can review, approve, administer, and document a facility-prepared examination utilizing approximately half the resources it takes for an NRC-prepared examination. This fact, coupled with year-to-year fluctuations in the total number of examinations, complicates the NRC's budgeting and scheduling activities. Consequently, the NRC has found it necessary to obtain updated data on power reactor facility licensees' initial operator licensing examination needs, including estimates of the number of applicants to be examined and the facility licensees' intentions regarding preparation of the examinations.

The NRC expects to solicit annually the voluntary reporting of updated information concerning operator licensing examinations through its generic communications program. This information will help the NRC budget and schedule its resources. The NRC regional offices will continue to coordinate specific examination dates with the training managers of affected facility licensees.

## **NEEDED INFORMATION**

The plant-specific information that is needed by the NRC for resource planning purposes is identified in Attachment 1:

### **A. Proposed Examination Preparation Schedule:**

Estimate the number of examinations you intend to prepare and estimate the number of examinations you will request the NRC to prepare during CYs 2003 through 2006. For examinations that are prepared by facility licensees, the NRC will assume that each examination includes the required outline, written examination(s), and operating test(s), unless otherwise specified (shared examination development is permitted and should be coordinated with the appropriate 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 2006.

### **C. Proposed Generic Fundamentals Examination Schedule:**

Estimate the number of applicants who plan to take the GFE in CYs 2003 and 2004.

## **VOLUNTARY RESPONSE**

Addressees that choose to submit the information identified in NRC Form 536 are asked to do so within 30 days after receipt of this RIS. Your response should be directed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Document Control Desk, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, and a copy of the response should be sent to the applicable regional office.

## **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. Therefore, this is not a backfit under 10 CFR 50.109, and 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.

## **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT**

This RIS contains 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 the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance number 3150-0131, which expires on July 31, 2002 (new clearance in process). The public reporting burden for this voluntary information collection (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 regarding this burden estimate to the Records Management Branch (T-6 E6), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, or by Internet electronic mail to [<bjs1@nrc.gov>](mailto:bjs1@nrc.gov) and to the Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOB-10202 (3150-0131), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION NOTIFICATION**

If a means used to impose an information collection does not display a currently valid OMB clearance number, the NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, the information collection.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact one of the technical contacts listed below or the appropriate Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation Project Manager.

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Attachments:

1. NRC Form 536, "Operator Licensing Examination Data"
2. List of Recently Issued NRC Regulatory Issue Summaries

<b>NRC FORM 536</b> <small>(8-2000)</small>	<b>U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION</b>	<small>APPROVED BY OMB: NO. 3150-0131</small>	<small>EXPIRES: 07/31/2002</small>
<b>OPERATOR LICENSING          EXAMINATION DATA</b>		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 Management Branch (T-8 E6), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by internet e-mail to <a href="mailto:1601@nrc.gov">1601@nrc.gov</a> 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.	

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 ____		
	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CANDIDATES						