

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
OFFICE OF NEW REACTORS
WASHINGTON, DC 20555-0001

April 17, 2019

**NRC REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY 2019-02
PREPARATION AND SCHEDULING OF OPERATOR LICENSING EXAMINATIONS**

ADDRESSEES

All holders of, or applicants for, a power reactor operating license or construction permit under Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 50, "Domestic Licensing of Production and Utilization Facilities," except those that have certified that they have permanently ceased operations and have permanently removed all fuel from the reactor vessel.

All holders of, or applicants for, a power reactor early site permit or a combined license under 10 CFR Part 52, "Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants."

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 on the estimated number of applicants planning to take operator licensing examinations. This information will help the NRC plan its resources more effectively. This RIS supersedes in its entirety RIS 2018-02, "Preparation and Scheduling of Operator Licensing Examinations," dated March 26, 2018 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. ML18029A423), and requires no action or written response on the part of addressees. Addressee actions to collect and transmit the requested information are strictly voluntary.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Subpart E, "Written Examinations and Operating Tests," of 10 CFR Part 55, "Operators' Licenses," contains the relevant NRC regulations for operator licensing examinations. In particular, 10 CFR 55.40, "Implementation," permits nuclear power reactor facility licensees to prepare, proctor, and grade the written examinations required by 10 CFR 55.41, "Written Examination: Operators," and 10 CFR 55.43, "Written Examination: Senior Operators," subject to certain conditions. Under 10 CFR 55.40, facility licensees may also prepare the NRC-administered operating tests required by 10 CFR 55.45, "Operating Tests," subject to certain conditions. Under 10 CFR 55.40(c), facility licensees that choose not to prepare, proctor, and grade their own written examinations and prepare their own operating tests must request, in writing, that the NRC prepare, proctor, and grade the written examinations and operating tests.

In RIS 2018-02, the NRC asked power reactor licensees to voluntarily submit proposed schedules of examinations they intended to prepare and to estimate the number of applicants to

be tested for onsite examinations in calendar years (CYs) 2020 through 2023. This RIS requests that licensees voluntarily update initial examination schedules for CYs 2021 through 2024.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The NRC uses nearly twice as many resources to prepare an examination as it does to review, approve, administer, and document a licensee-prepared examination. The number of examinations licensees administer fluctuates annually. Consequently, the NRC has found it helpful to request an annual update of the operator licensing examination needs of power reactor facility licensees. Therefore, the NRC requests that licensees voluntarily provide proposed examination schedules and an estimate of the number of applicants. The update should indicate whether the licensee or the NRC will prepare the exam. This information will help the NRC budget its resources. In an effort to conduct initial license examinations more efficiently, the NRC regional offices will coordinate with facility licensees to build a more level examination schedule that does not result in peak examination periods throughout a CY. Therefore, licensees can expect to be asked for increased flexibility when selecting their examination dates.

The NRC requests that each licensee provide the information described below using NRC Form 536, "Operator Licensing Examination Data." NRC Form 536, attached, is also available on the NRC Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/forms/nrc536.pdf>

A. Proposed Examination Preparation Schedule

Licensees should determine the number of examinations they intend to prepare, and the number of examinations they will request the NRC to prepare, during CYs 2021 through 2024. For examinations that facility licensees will prepare, the NRC will assume that each examination includes the written examination and the operating test, unless the licensee specifies otherwise. Joint NRC and licensee examination development is permitted and should be coordinated with the applicable NRC regional office. Licensees should notify the applicable NRC regional office by letter of any required schedule changes that arise after submission of the RIS response for agreement to, and coordination of, changes to examination administration.

B. Initial Operator License Examinations

For each desired examination, licensees should determine the expected number of applicants to be tested and enter the proposed primary and alternate dates of the examination. Licensees should choose the primary and alternate dates to provide the NRC the necessary flexibility to ensure that examinations can be completed in an efficient manner. Primary and alternate dates should be separated by at least 4 weeks. If requesting more than one examination per CY, licensees should fill in the applicable columns, as appropriate, through CY 2024.

VOLUNTARY RESPONSE

The NRC asks addressees that choose to submit the information requested in NRC Form 536 to do so within 30 days of receiving this RIS. Addressees should direct responses to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Document Control Desk, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and send a copy of the response to the applicable NRC regional office, ATTN: Operations Branch. Responses to the region may be submitted electronically to the appropriate technical contact listed at the end of this document.

BACKFITTING AND ISSUE FINALITY

This RIS requests the addressees to inform the NRC of the dates and number of initial operator licensing examinations for CYs 2021 through 2024, as well as whether the licensee or the NRC will prepare the examinations. This RIS requests the addressees to voluntarily provide information to assist the NRC in the administrative tasks of scheduling and conducting operator licensing examinations. This constitutes information collection and reporting and is not within the purview of the Backfit Rule, in accordance with 10 CFR 50.109, "Backfit," or any of the issue finality provisions in 10 CFR Part 52. In addition, the RIS does not require any action or written response from the addressees. Any action on the part of addressees to collect and transmit operator licensing examination data in accordance with the request contained in this RIS is strictly voluntary. Therefore, this RIS does not represent backfitting as defined in 10 CFR 50.109(a)(1), nor is it otherwise inconsistent with any issue finality provision in 10 CFR Part 52. For these reasons, the NRC staff did not perform a backfit analysis for this RIS or further address any issue finality criteria in 10 CFR Part 52.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTIFICATION

The NRC did not publish in the *Federal Register* a notice of opportunity for public comment on this RIS because it concerns an administrative aspect of the regulatory process that involves the voluntary submission of information on the part of addressees.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

This RIS is not a rule as defined in the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 801–808).

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

This RIS contains voluntary information collections that are subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved these information collections (approval number 3150-0131). The burden to the public for these information collections is estimated to average 1 hour per response. Send comments regarding this information collection to the Information Services Branch, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Mail Stop: T-6A10, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to Infocollects.Resource@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, a collection of information unless the document requesting or requiring the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

CONTACT

Please direct any questions about this matter to the technical contacts listed below.

Robert M. Taylor, Director **/RA by A. Bradford for/**
Division of Licensing, Siting
and Environmental Analysis
Office of New Reactors

Christopher G. Miller, Director **/RA/**
Division of Inspection and
Regional Support
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Note: NRC generic communications may be found on the NRC public Web site,
<http://www.nrc.gov>, under NRC Library/Document Collections.

Technical Contacts:

Christian Cowdrey, NRR 301-415-3085 E-mail: christian.cowdrey@nrc.gov	Donald Jackson, RI 610-337-5306 E-mail: donald.jackson@nrc.gov
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NRC REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY 2019-02, "PREPARATION AND SCHEDULING OF OPERATOR LICENSING EXAMINATIONS," DATE: April 17, 2019

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***via email**

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OFFICE	RE:IOLB:DIRS*	Tech Editor*	C:IOLB:DIRS*	D:DORL:NRR*	MA:MPS:NRR*	OCIO*
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DATE	2/7/19	4/12/19	02/26/2019	2/26/2019	2/26/19	04/17/19
OFFICE	D:DIRS:NRR					
NAME	CMiller					
DATE	04/17/19					

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**OPERATOR LICENSING
EXAMINATION DATA**

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 Information Services Branch (T-2 F43), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC20555-0001, or by e-mail to Infocollects.Resource@nrc.gov, and to the Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOF-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

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				