

Vogtle PEmails

From: Hoellman, Jordan
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 11:32 AM
To: Vogtle PEmails
Cc: Kallan, Paul
Subject: Revised Request for Exemption and RAI Response: Operator Licensing
Attachments: 2016-05-19 Vogtle Revised Request for Exemption and RAI Response - Operator Licensing.pdf

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Hearing Identifier: Vogtle_COL_Docs_Public
Email Number: 28

Mail Envelope Properties (d9e0806897fd4d569c5824c016f07f87)

Subject: Revised Request for Exemption and RAI Response: Operator Licensing
Sent Date: 5/17/2016 11:32:09 AM
Received Date: 5/17/2016 11:32:11 AM
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Created By: Jordan.Hoellman2@nrc.gov

Recipients:
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Tracking Status: None
"Vogtle PEmails" <Vogtle.PEmails@nrc.gov>
Tracking Status: None

Post Office: HQPWMSMRS03.nrc.gov

Files	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE	229	5/17/2016 11:32:11 AM
2016-05-19 Vogtle Revised Request for Exemption and RAI Response - Operator Licensing.pdf		
591979		

Options
Priority: Standard
Return Notification: No
Reply Requested: No
Sensitivity: Normal
Expiration Date:
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Month XX, 2016

Docket Nos.: 52-025
52-026

ND-16-XXXX

10 CFR 55.11
10 CFR 55.40(a) and (b)
10 CFR 55.45(b)
10 CFR 55.59
10 CFR 55.53

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Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4
Revised Request for Exemption and RAI Response:
Operator Licensing

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) requested an exemption from the plant walkthrough requirement of 10 CFR 55.45(b) that was submitted to the NRC by letter dated April 15, 2016, [ADAMS Accession No. ML16109A013]. In response to SNC's exemption request, the NRC issued two Requests for Additional Information (RAIs): RAI Letter No. 9, dated April 21, 2016 [ADAMS Accession No. ML16112A425]; and, RAI Letter No. 10, dated April 27, 2016, [ADAMS Accession No. ML16118A183].

This letter supersedes SNC's April 15, 2016, exemption request and includes SNC's response to the NRC's RAI Letters No. 9 and No. 10.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 55.11, "Specific Exemptions," Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) requests an exemption from the plant walkthrough requirement of 10 CFR 55.45(b), "Operating Tests, Implementation and Administration" and from the following specific requirements in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," which is incorporated by reference into 10 CFR 55.40(a) and (b):

5/16/2016 9:04 AM

- NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.a, evaluate three in-plant Job Performance Measures (JPMs)
- NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.b, entry into the radiologically controlled area (RCA)

These exemptions are necessary because these requirements cannot be met at the present time due to the current state of VEGP Unit 3 construction.

The exemption is necessary to ensure SNC has licensed operators prior to fuel receipt for VEGP Unit 3.

SNC recommends termination of these exemptions after completion of the first VEGP Unit 3 refueling outage. This termination point aligns with UFSAR, Section 13.2A.6, "Cold Licensing Process Applicability and Termination."

These exemptions are authorized by law, will not endanger life or property, and are otherwise in the public interest.

Enclosure 1 provides background information, related regulations and discussion related to the plant walkthrough requirements of 10 CFR 55.45(b).

Enclosure 2 provides SNC's response to the NRC's RAI Letter No. 9.

Enclosure 3 provides SNC's response to the NRC's RAI Letter No. 10.

This letter contains no regulatory commitments.

SNC requests staff approval of this exemption by Month XX, 2016.

Should you have any questions, please contact Michael Yox at (706) 848-6459.

Respectfully submitted,

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY

Karen D. Fili
KDF/MC/amm

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, 2016

Notary Public: _____

My commission expires: _____

Enclosure 1: Plant Walkthrough Exemptions

Enclosure 2: RAI Letter No. 9 Response

Enclosure 3: RAI Letter No. 10 Response

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Document Services RTYPE: VND.LI.L00

File AR.01.02.06

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Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4

ND-16-XXXX

Enclosure 1

(This Enclosure consists of 16 pages, including this cover page)

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1.0 Summary Description:

Pursuant to 10 CFR 55.11, "Specific Exemptions," Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) requests an exemption from the plant walkthrough requirement of 10 CFR 55.45(b), "Operating Tests, Implementation and Administration" and from the following specific requirements in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," which is incorporated by reference into 10 CFR 55.40(a) and (b):

- NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.a, evaluate three in-plant Job Performance Measures (JPMs)
- NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.b, entry into the radiologically controlled area (RCA)

These exemptions are necessary because these requirements cannot be met at the present time due to the current state of VEGP Unit 3 construction.

2.0 Detailed Description:

The plant walkthrough portion of an operating test at a site with an operating reactor is normally administered by conducting in-plant JPMs on location in the plant. This enables the Examiner to evaluate the applicant's knowledge and familiarity with the plant layout and equipment locations. The applicant simulates performing the actions of the JPM at or near the equipment location and the Examiner engages the applicant in discussion as necessary to complete the evaluation. In-plant JPMs rarely require the applicant to actually perform the activity being evaluated because doing so would result in operation of the plant by an un-licensed operator. NUREG-1021, ES-301, Attachment 2, page 21 requires that the Examiner "*actually observe the applicant perform an action, or in the case of a JPM in the plant, describe exactly what it takes to perform an action.*"

During construction of a new plant, the majority of the operating tests (i.e., the simulator operating test, the control room JPMs, and the administrative topic JPMs) can be performed independent of construction activities. Only the in-plant systems JPMs cannot be performed using existing evaluation methods until a sufficient amount of equipment is installed in the plant to ensure a quality testing environment. SNC's combined operating license includes in its UFSAR a Cold License Training Plan that describes acceptable methods the licensee can use to meet On-the-Job Training (OJT) requirements until plant construction is completed. However, 10 CFR 55.45(b) makes no similar provision for NRC Staff to administer plant walkthroughs during plant construction.

The exemption is needed because it is not possible to perform the three in-plant JPMs or an RCA entry using existing evaluation methods until a sufficient amount of equipment is installed in the plant to ensure a quality testing environment.

2.1 In-Plant JPM Exemption

10 CFR 55.40(a) directs the Commission to use the criteria in NUREG-1021 to evaluate operating tests. 10 CFR 55.45(b) requires the operating test administered to licensed operator applicants to include a plant walkthrough. NRC Staff (Examiners) administer the plant walkthrough. NUREG-1021, section ES-301.B, states the walkthrough portion of the operating test consists of two parts, "Administrative Topics" and "Control Room/In-Plant Systems." NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.a, differentiates between Control Room JPMs and In-Plant Systems JPMs. It further specifies that the in-plant portion consists of three JPMs. NUREG-1021, Appendix E, section D.1, states that Examiners will use job performance measures (JPMs) to evaluate the areas covered during the walkthrough test.

An exemption from the plant walkthrough requirement of 10 CFR 55.45(b) is necessary because it is not possible for Examiners to administer the three in-plant JPMs as described in NUREG-1021, given the current state of VEGP Unit 3 construction.

2.2 RCA Entry Exemption

As just described in Section 2.1, NUREG-1021 states that the in-plant portion of the examination consists of three JPMs. NUREG-1021, section ES-301.D.4.b, requires that at least one of the tasks conducted in the plant *"shall require the applicant to enter the RCA."*

An exemption from the plant walkthrough requirement of 10 CFR 55.45(b) is necessary because it is not possible to enter the RCA given the current state of VEGP Unit 3 construction.

3.0 Compliance Methods:

Until plant construction is completed, SNC proposes the cold license training plan methods described in NEI 06-13A be used.

3.1 Administration of In-Plant JPMs using Cold License Training Plan Methods

In a Safety Evaluation Report dated December 5, 2008, the NRC concluded that "NEI 06-13A 'Template for an Industry Training Program description,' Revision 1 complies with the applicable NRC regulations, guidance, and industry standards and can be utilized by applicants for COLAs." NEI 06-13A, Appendix A, "Cold License Training Plan," Section 13.2A.3, "Conduct of On-the-Job Training (OJT)," states, "Until plant construction is completed, acceptable methods for the conduct of on-the-job training include discussion, simulation, and use of mockup equipment and virtual reality technology." These requirements were subsequently incorporated into the VEGP 3&4 UFSAR, Section 13.2A, "Cold License Training Plan."

SNC proposes utilizing the same methods for administering in-plant JPMs that the NRC has already determined are acceptable for training licensed operator applicants. Utilizing cold license training plan evaluation methods during the administration of in-plant JPMs aligns examination evaluation methods with those contained in SNC's license and serves to maintain examination conditions that are uniform and consistent with training conditions and

current exam methodology for in-plant walkthroughs described in NUREG-1021.

Incorporating cold license training plan methods aligns the requirements of 10 CFR 55.45(b) and the Vogtle 3 & 4 UFSAR, thereby permitting examination of the 13 items described in 10 CFR 55.45(a). This represents little deviation from how JPMs are administered at operating reactor sites, because any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will still follow the NUREG-1021 JPM development process, which requires the NRC Examination Chief and Examiners to review JPMs to ensure that they discriminate at an agreed-upon minimal measure of knowledge or performance.

Additionally, validity for the test items described in NUREG-1021, Appendix A, Section C will not be impacted, because utilizing cold licensing evaluation methods during the administration of in-plant walkthrough JPMs does not alter the method in which JPMs are selected or sampled.

The following provides additional detail beyond the information contained in UFSAR, Section 13.2A.3, regarding the various methods that NRC Staff may use during the administration of a JPM to allow an applicant to demonstrate whether he or she has knowledge of plant locations and knowledge of how to perform the task. These are repeated in Enclosure 3, Response #1.

- Plant layout diagrams and equipment diagrams can be used as necessary and/or as appropriate to allow an applicant to demonstrate knowledge of plant and equipment locations.
- Breaker Lab – Vogtle has a breaker lab that contains 6.9kV and 480V breakers that can be locally operated and racked in and out.
- Maintenance Flow Loop – contains generic plant equipment, such as pumps, valves, and instruments for demonstrating the fundamental knowledge of operation and monitoring of plant equipment.
- Remote Shutdown Room (RSR) – Vogtle training facilities have installed two remote shutdown rooms that allow applicants to transfer operational control from the main control room simulator to the RSR and operate the plant from the RSR.
- RCA mockup – A training environment that includes the required equipment for an operator to sign into a radiation work package, activate their electronic alarming dosimeter, and dress out as required for the task.
- Discuss method – using the procedure and plant layout drawings, the applicant discusses the required actions of a task. Discussion can cover required PPE, actions, system response and location. Location information can include specifics such as building, elevation, and room.

Performing and administering JPMs using the cold license methods is substantively the same as the process used for a JPM performed and administered in the plant. In both cases no actual plant equipment is actually operated because neither the NRC evaluator nor the license applicant are independently qualified to operate the equipment. Both processes start by presenting the applicant a task to perform using a cue sheet. After the applicant

understands the task, they inform the evaluator they are ready and begin the evaluation. Next the applicant must lead the evaluator to the correct plant location(s) to perform the task while demonstrating all requisite knowledge and abilities to navigate that path. In the cold license process, this is accomplished using plant location drawings vice physically walking to a location. Once the applicant has demonstrated knowledge of how to get to the location in either method, he will simulate performing the procedure. In both methods, this simulation requires that the applicant can identify which components they are operating, provide a description of how they are operated, and explain expected responses. The difference from an in-plant JPM is that the applicant is using a plant layout drawing and/or picture of the components vice pointing to actual plant equipment. In the cold license method, plant layout drawings and/or pictures of components not directly related to the task will also be made available to the applicant to maintain discriminatory value (i.e. the applicant has the same opportunity to fail as with an in-plant JPM by choosing the incorrect component or by incorrectly simulating the operation of the correct component). The applicant must demonstrate all required competencies on task performance through discussion and interpretation of the cues provided. When the task is complete the applicant informs the evaluator and JPM is completed.

There are multiple locations where this manner of JPM can occur. The applicant can be asked to actually operate components if they exist in either a laboratory, flow loop, or mockup form. In this case the applicant must demonstrate to the evaluator how to locate the plant equipment, and then operate actual components in one of these locations. In the case of a virtual reality method the applicant must navigate to the component and use a controller to perform actions to complete the task. In the case of the RSR, a full Remote Shutdown Workstation (including transfer switches) is part of the simulation facility; the applicant would be able to actually perform the task as if they were operating the plant. The applicant would not receive more information or knowledge regarding the location of the task or how to complete the task due to the use of the alternative methods than the applicant would receive from the prompt that would be used for in-plant JPMs. For example, in an RSR JPM, the only differences are describing how to travel to RSR rather than actually walking to the RSR and, since the RSR is a simulation facility, the task could actually be performed rather than using a description which would be the case for an in-plant JPM. Additionally, if a task were to occur in the RCA, the applicant has the ability to use a mockup to show all necessary skills and knowledge abilities to enter the RCA (including signing onto a Radiation Work Permit (RWP) and using electronic dosimetry). Next, the applicant would use the discuss method outlined above to demonstrate knowledge of location and skill to perform the task. Alternatively, actual valves may be present at the location of the RCA mockup for the applicant to operate.

Additionally, administration of the JPMs using cold license techniques allows all the provisions in NUREG-1021, Appendix C "Job Performance Measures Guidelines," Section D "Walk-Through Evaluation Techniques" to be met.

In-plant JPMs using Cold Licensing Techniques mirror operating plants in the following ways:

- No equipment is physically operated so the applicant must respond to evaluator provided cues;
- Both techniques require the applicant to demonstrate knowledge required to physically locate the component, including Building, Elevation, and Room Number;
- Both techniques provide sufficient discriminatory value by affording the applicant the opportunity to simulate operating incorrect equipment, resulting in JPM failure;
- The applicant must model through discussion the knowledge and skills to perform the task; and
- In the case of radiological areas the Generic Employee Training Control Point and mock radiation areas can be used to physically display the ability to perform tasks necessary to enter and exit a Radiologically Controlled Area (RCA), navigate radiological controlled areas, including simulated contaminated areas and then proceed like other in-plant JPMs.

The primary change is that the questions Examiners currently ask on location in the plant will now be asked in a location other than “in-plant.” The questions will remain the same, but some additional description of plant layout and equipment location may be required of the applicant.

Any questions or discussions that occur while using cold licensing methods during task evaluation will still differentiate between competent and less-than competent applicants.

3.2 RCA Mockup Alternative to RCA Entry

An RCA mockup facility is available for training and evaluation use. The mockup is used by Vogtle 1&2 to train outage workers. The use of the mockup will be incorporated into the performance of at least one JPM selected for the walkthrough portion of the operating test. Standards for entry into the mockup RCA are identical to an actual RCA, and can be used to evaluate an applicant’s understanding of, and ability to perform, actions related to an RCA entry.

The RCA mockup provides an environment to observe an operator’s ability to sign into a radiation work package, activate their electronic alarming dosimeter, and dress out as required. Once the applicant has demonstrated the required competence in regards to RCA entry and their knowledge of administrative subjects related to radiation control, the Examiner can evaluate the task using the cold license training methods described in Section 2.1 above.

Individuals being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements will be qualified Radiation Workers as Vogtle 3&4 prior to granting RCA Entry Exemption as a means of conducting in-plant JPMs. As radiation workers, these individuals are being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements, and were previously trained and evaluated for RCA entry. Training included real equipment, electronic alarming dosimeters, radiation work packages, exit monitors, and

dress-out facilities. This training is used as a means of ensuring that all radiation workers Vogtle 3&4 are capable of making entry into the RAC.

The Mockup facility is the same facility that is used to train Vogtle 1&2 licensed personnel.

Any questions or discussions that occur while using the RCA mockup during task evaluation will still differentiate between competent and less-than competent applicants.

3.3 Termination of Alternative Compliance Methods

The use of alternative compliance methods will terminate after completion of the first VEGP Unit 3 refueling outage. This termination point aligns with UFSAR, Section 13.2A.6, "Cold Licensing Process Applicability and Termination," and NEI 06-13A, Appendix A, Section 1.6, "Cold Licensing Process Applicability and Termination."

This termination point was selected because regardless of when enough of the plant has been constructed and equipment installed to support normal JPM administration, licensed operator applicants will continue to be trained and evaluated per UFSAR, Section 13.2A.3, "Cold License Training Plan" until after completion of the first refueling outage as required by UFSAR, Section 13.2A.6.

3.4 Summary

An exemption from the plant walkthrough requirements of 10 CFR 55.45(b) is necessary because it is not possible for Examiners to administer the three in-plant JPMs and RCA entry as described in NUREG-1021 given the current state of VEGP Unit 3 construction.

Employing cold licensing evaluation methods in the administration of the operating test is an acceptable alternative for complying with Section 107 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as amended and is in keeping with the Commission's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for operator licensing examinations.

The use of alternative compliance methods will terminate after completion of the first VEGP Unit 3 refueling outage.

4.0 Applicable Regulatory Requirements/Criteria

This section provides a summary of regulations applicable to this exemption request.

4.1 Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as Amended

Section 107, "Operators' Licenses," states in part that:

The Commission shall prescribe uniform conditions for licensing individuals as operators.

4.2 10 CFR Part 55, "Operators' Licenses"

Section 55.40, "Implementation," states in part that:

(a) The Commission shall use the criteria in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," to evaluate the operating tests prepared by power reactor facility licensees pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) Power reactor facility licensees may prepare, proctor, and grade the written examinations required by 55.41 and 55.43 and may prepare the operating tests required by 55.45, subject to the following conditions:

(1) Power reactor facility licensees shall prepare the required examinations and tests in accordance with the criteria in NUREG-1021 as described in paragraph (a) of this section.

Section 55.45(b), "Implementation--Administration," states in part that:

(b) The operating test will be administered in a plant walkthrough and in either:

(1) A simulation facility that the Commission has approved;

(2) A plant-referenced simulator; or

(3) The plant.

4.3 NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors"

ES-201, "Initial Operator Licensing Examination Process"

Section B, "Background," states in part that:

Licensees may propose alternatives to the examination criteria contained here and evaluate how the proposed alternatives provide an acceptable method of complying with the Commission's regulations. The NRC staff will review any proposed alternatives and make a decision regarding their acceptability. The NRC will not approve any alternative that would compromise the agency's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for the operator licensing examinations.

ES-301, "Preparing Initial Operating Tests"

Section B, "Background," states in part that:

The plant walkthrough consists of two parts ("Administrative Topics" and Control Room/In-Plant Systems").

Section D, "Instructions," paragraph 4.a, differentiates between Control Room JPMs and In-Plant Systems JPMs. It further specifies that the in-plant portion consists of 3 JPMs.

Attachment 2, "Verifiable Action Guidelines," states in part that:

*The intent of performing a verifiable action is to actually **observe** the applicant perform an action, or in the case of a JPM in the plant, describe exactly what it takes to perform an action.*

Appendix A, "Overview of Generic Examination Concepts"

Section B, "Background," states in part that:

If the internal and external attributes of examinations are allowed to vary significantly, the uniform conditions that are required by Section 107 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the basis upon which the NRC's licensing decision rest are challenged. The NRC must reasonably control and structure the examination processes to ensure the integrity of the licenses it issues.

The discussions herein clarify the intent of the NRC's examination criteria, thereby decreasing the likelihood of inconsistencies among examinations, particularly with regard to the level of knowledge and difficulty.

Sections C and D contain discussions of examination validity and reliability referred to in Section B.

Section C, "Validity," states:

For a test to be considered valid, it must be shown to measure that which it is intended to measure. In the case of the NRC examinations, the intent is to measure the examinee's knowledge and ability, such that those who pass will be able to perform the duties of a reactor operator (RO) or senior reactor operator (SRO) to ensure the safe operation of the plant.

Section D, "Reliability," states:

Examinations should differ only in the specific content covered, not in their developmental processes, manner of sampling, item construction criteria, level of item bank use, or their levels of knowledge and difficulty. The standardization of the process creates consistency of measurement.

Appendix E, "Policies and Guidelines for Taking NRC Examinations"

Section D.1, "Walkthrough Test Guidelines," states in part that:

The walkthrough test covers control room systems, local system operations, and administrative requirements. The examiner will evaluate these areas using job performance measures (JPMs) and specific follow-up questions, as necessary.

4.4 NEI 06-13A, Rev 2, "Template for an Industry Training Program Description"

NEI 06-13A, Rev 2, was incorporated into the VEGP 3&4 UFSAR, Section 13.2A by License Document Change Request, LCDR 2013-047.

Appendix C - Final Safety Evaluation Report NEI 06-13A, Revision1, Section 4, "Conclusion," states in part that the [NRC] Operator Licensing and Human Performance Branch "(COLP) staff concludes that NEI 06-13A, 'Template for an Industry Training Program description,' Revision 1 complies with the applicable NRC regulations, guidance, and industry standards and can be utilized by applicants for COLAs."

4.5 VEGP 3&4 UFSAR, Rev. 4.0, "Updated Final Safety Analysis Report"

Chapter 13, "Conduct of Operation"

Section 13.2A, "Cold License Training Plan"

Section 13.2A.3, "Conduct of On-the-Job Training (OJT)," states:

"Until plant construction is completed, acceptable methods for the conduct of on-the-job training include discussion, simulation, and use of mockup equipment and virtual reality technology."

Section 13.2A.6, "Cold Licensing Process Applicability and Termination," states in part that:

"The cold licensing process will terminate after completion of the first refueling outage."

5.0 Technical Evaluation

5.1 Content Validity (NUREG-1021, Appendix A, Section C.1)

JPM development will follow the process described in this section to maintain content validity without deviation. Utilizing cold licensing evaluation methods during the administration of in-plant walkthrough JPMs does not alter the method in which JPMs are selected or sampled. For this reason, utilizing cold licensing evaluation methods does not impact the validity of examination content.

5.2 Operational Validity (NUREG-1021, Appendix A, Section C.2)

JPM development will follow the process described in this section to maintain operational validity without deviation. Any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will still differentiate between competent and less-than competent applicants and will not impact operational validity.

5.3 Discrimination Validity (NUREG-1021, Appendix A, Section C.3)

JPM development will follow the process described in this section to maintain discrimination validity without deviation. Any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will still discriminate at an agreed-upon minimal measure of knowledge or performance.

For this reason:

- A criterion-referenced test remains unaffected and achievable because both the individual JPMs and the overall examination will discriminate between applicants who have and have not mastered the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for evaluating JPMs will not impact the ability to set overall *Cut Scores* at 80 percent such that the minimally qualified applicant will be able to obtain a score of at least 80 percent.

- JPM selection and development, and any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will still discriminate between safe and unsafe operators.
- Any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for evaluating JPMs will not impact the ability to set cut scores at 80 percent while achieving a level of difficulty range of 70 to 90 percent for individual JPMs. The questions, discussions, and other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will continue to incorporate the concepts described in NUREG-1021, Appendix A, Section C.3.d, for setting item difficulty, thereby maintaining a functional level of discrimination with a minimal pass score of 80 percent.
- Any questions, discussions, or other cold licensing methods used for task evaluation will have no impact on how the examination bank is used.

5.4 Reliability

JPM development will follow the process described in NUREG-1021 without deviation. That process has been proven reliable, consistent, repeatable, yielding a high degree of confidence in the validity of pass/fail decisions. Utilizing cold license training methods when developing JPMs does not impact examination reliability.

5.5 Conclusion

Employing cold license training Plan evaluation methods during the development and administration of in-plant JPMs facilitates the consistent and reliable administration of operating tests in a manner that evaluates applicants' knowledge, skills, and abilities with the same effectiveness as plant walkthroughs in an operating plant. These evaluation methods have added value in that the NRC has already endorsed/approved them as an acceptable alternative to performing actual plant walkthroughs during training.

These exemptions do not impact the ability to maintain equitable and consistent testing under uniform conditions because license applicants will be evaluated using the same methods employed during their training. Using the cold license training evaluation methods allows for an equitable and consistent evaluation requiring the same level of knowledge and difficulty because:

- Using the methods won't provide the license applicant any advantages.
- The initiating cue for an in-plant JPM would not be any different for a simulate and/or discuss JPM.
- SNC has identified adequate alternate methods consistent with the approved Cold License Training Plan. Vogtle has a sufficient number of tasks to meet the requirements of NUREG-1021, ES-301, D.4.b; therefore, the process for selection of in-plant JPMs will not differ due to the use of the cold licensing evaluation methods.

Accordingly, employing cold licensing evaluation methods in the administration of the operating test is an acceptable alternative for complying with Section 107 of the Atomic

Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as amended and is in keeping with the Commission's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for operator licensing examinations.

The Commission has the authority under the law to grant these exemptions. The exemptions would not endanger life or property and would be in the public interest.

6.0 Regulatory Evaluation

6.1 Authorized By Law

The Commission has the authority to grant exemptions and such exemptions are authorized by law in accordance with the regulatory process of 10 CFR 55.11, which states, "The Commission may, upon application by an interested person, or upon its own initiative, grant such exemptions from the requirements of the regulations in this part as it determines are authorized by law and will not endanger life or property and are otherwise in the public interest."

Section 107 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as Amended, states that the Commission shall prescribe uniform conditions for licensing individuals as operators. 10 CFR 55.40(a) directs the Commission to use the criteria in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," to evaluate operating tests. ES-201, Section B of NUREG-1021 states, "Licensees may propose alternatives to the examination criteria contained here and evaluate how the proposed alternatives provide an acceptable method of complying with the Commission's regulations. NRC staff will review any proposed alternatives and make a decision regarding their acceptability. NRC will not approve any alternative that would compromise the agency's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for operator licensing examinations."

These exemptions are justified, are fully within the authority of the Commission to grant the relief requested in accordance with 10 CFR 55.11, and will not result in a violation of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, or other laws.

Employing cold licensing evaluation methods in the administration of the operating test and allowing the use of an RCA mockup are acceptable alternatives for complying with Section 107 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as amended and are in keeping with the Commission's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for operator licensing examinations. As discussed in Section 3 and 5, using the cold license training evaluation methods allows for an equitable and consistent evaluation requiring the same level of knowledge and difficulty.

6.2 Will Not Endanger Life or Property

During the period these exemptions are in place, SNC will continue to train its operators to operate the plant in accordance with the VEGP 3&4 UFSAR. Additionally, all operators that are issued a license will be enrolled in a continuing training program until the 10 CFR 52.103(g) finding.

Each applicant's performance of in-plant systems JPMs will be evaluated using the alternative methods of discussion, simulation, and use of mockup equipment and virtual reality technology as authorized in the Cold License Training Plan rather than an actual plant walkthrough. Any questions or discussions that occur while using cold licensing methods during task evaluation will still differentiate between competent and less-than competent applicants.

Accordingly, employing cold licensing evaluation methods in the administration of the operating test is an acceptable alternative for complying with Section 107 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 USC 2137) as amended and is in keeping with the Commission's statutory responsibility to prescribe uniform conditions for operator licensing examinations. This exemption will not endanger life or property because as explained in Sections 5.5 and 6.1, the purpose of the in-plant JPMs for evaluating license applicants is met by the use of the cold license training methods in the same manner as in-plant JPMs; therefore, there will be no reduction in the ability of licensed operators.

6.3 Otherwise in the Public Interest

The proposed exemptions are in the public interest because they facilitate more effective plant operator testing by aligning (as described in section 1.2 above) the administration of plant walkthroughs with cold license training methods the NRC has already determined to be safe and which are reflected in SNC's license. Using the cold license training evaluation methods allows for an equitable and consistent evaluation requiring the same level of knowledge and difficulty.

The exemptions are in keeping with the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation, including: "Clarity", which states that regulations should be coherent, logical, and practical; and "Reliability", which states that regulations should be based on the best available knowledge from research and operational experience. The requested exemptions ensure that plant walkthroughs can meet the NRC objective of demonstrating an understanding of, and ability to perform, the actions necessary to accomplish a representative sample of the 13 criteria within 10 CFR 55.45(a). Approval of the exemptions ensures that a logical and practical regulatory path forward is maintained to support the training and licensing of well-qualified operators who will be prepared to support the extensive pre-operational and startup testing associated with new construction. This is achieved by allowing operating examinations to proceed prior to substantial completion of the plant, while still ensuring that the applicants' knowledge is sufficient to support safe operation. Approval of the exemptions also promotes stability in the nuclear operational and planning processes by allowing training and licensing of operators to follow the path to cold licensing outlined by industry and the NRC.

Licensing operators early allows SNC to plan, train and employ the numbers of trainers and licensed operator applicants far enough in advance to prevent the planned use of overtime. This is in keeping with UFSAR, Section 13.2.1, "Licensed Operator Training," which states, "Before initial fuel loading, the number of persons trained in preparation for RO and SRO

licensing examinations will be sufficient to meet regulatory requirements, with allowances for examination contingencies and without the need for planned overtime.”

This early approach to licensing operators is in keeping with the NRC’s Efficiency Principle of Good Regulation. This approach also supports the Reliability Principle of Good Regulation. The methodical approach to meeting licensed operator needs minimizes risk in that it provides for a highly trained workforce to perform the preoperational testing for the plants, thereby providing assurance of safe startup and operation.

6.4 Significant Hazards Determination and Environmental Considerations

10 CFR 51.22(c)(25)(vi)(E), “51.22 Criterion for categorical exclusion; identification of licensing and regulatory actions eligible for categorical exclusion or otherwise not requiring environmental review.”

The requested exemption meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25)(vi)(E).

The requested exemption, which seeks a change to the training and qualification requirements in 10 CFR 55.45, does not make any changes to the facility or operating procedures and does not:

- a) involve a significant hazards consideration under the standards set forth in 10 CFR 50.92(c), in that it does not:
 - alter the design, function or operation of any plant equipment. Therefore, granting this exemption would not increase the probability or consequence of any previously evaluated accident.
 - create any new accident initiators. Therefore, granting this exemption does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.
 - exceed or alter a design basis or safety limit. Therefore, granting this exemption does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

Therefore, a finding of “no significant hazards considerations” is justified.

- b) involve any changes that would introduce any change to effluent types, affect any plant radiological or non-radiological effluent release quantities, or affect any effluent release paths, or the functionality of any design or operational features that are credited with controlling the release of effluents during plant operation. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed exemption does not involve a significant change in the types or a significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite.
- c) affect any plant radiation zones, nor change any controls required under 10 CFR Part 20 that preclude a significant increase in occupational radiation exposure. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed exemption does not involve a significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.

- d) involve any facility changes or change any construction activities. Therefore, there is no significant construction impact.
- e) alter the design, function, or operation of any plant equipment. Therefore, there is no significant increase in the potential for or consequences from radiological accidents.

Therefore, the exemption meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25).

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of this exemption.

7.0 References

1. Final Safety Evaluation for Topical Report NEI 06-13A, "Template for an Industry Training Program Description," Revision 1, dated December 5, 2008 [ML082950140]
2. VEGP 3&4 Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR), Revision 4.0
3. NEI 06-13A, Revision 2, "Template for an Industry Training Program Description"
4. NUREG-1021, Revision 10, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors"

Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4

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Enclosure 2

Response to NRC Request for Additional Information 9

(This Enclosure consists of 5 pages, including this cover page)

NRC RAI Regulatory Basis:

10 CFR 55.40(a) states, "The Commission shall use the criteria in NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," in effect six months before the examination date to prepare the written examinations required by §§ 55.41 and 55.43 and the operating tests required by § 55.45. The Commission shall also use the criteria in NUREG-1021 to evaluate the written examinations and operating tests prepared by power reactor facility licensees pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section." NUREG-1021, Revision 10, Appendix A, "Overview of Generic Examination Concepts," Section C.1.b (last paragraph), describes the concept of content validity as it relates to operator licensing examinations and states in part, "The initial examination, on the other hand, covers all instruction related to safety-significant K/As that either were or should have been taught during the training program. The examination standards ensure that the K/As are sampled in a relatively uniform process that would likely include content and instruction that occurred from the beginning to the end of the program and not be focused upon any particular segment of instruction." Additionally, NUREG-1021, ES-301, "Preparing Initial Operating Tests," Sections D.4.a and D.4.b, provide direction to select systems from the nine safety function groupings in the K/A catalog (i.e., NUREG-2103, "Knowledge and Abilities Catalog for Nuclear Power Plant Operators, Pressurized Water Reactors, Westinghouse AP1000" for the AP1000), and for each system selected, to select a task for which a JPM exists or can be developed.

NUREG-1021, ES-201, "Initial Operator Licensing Examination Process," Page 17/28, states, "The license applicants should not be able to predict or narrow the possible scope or content of the licensing examination based on the facility licensee's examination practices (other than those authorized by NUREG-1021, or in writing by the NRC)."

NUREG-1021, Appendix A, "Overview of Generic Examination Concepts," Section C.1, "Content Validity," outlines the three principal facets of test validity and the techniques that are used to establish the validity of NRC examinations.

NRC Question 1:

Enclosure 2, Section 1.3, "Task List," of the submittal dated April 15, 2016 [ADAMS Accession No. ML16109A013], says, "Tasks with DIF [difficulty, importance, and frequency ratings greater than 2.5 were then screened for their suitability for evaluation using the Cold Licensing alternate methods. Most of these tasks were determined to be suitable for evaluation using the Cold Licensing alternate methods. Some were not. The reason some tasks were unsuitable was because no procedure had, as yet, been developed to support performing these tasks. This is important because without a procedure, a task can neither be performed nor evaluated. SNC evaluated the set of tasks having procedures and determined that the total number was adequate to meet the validity and reliability criteria set forth in NUREG-1021, Appendix A."

NRC Question 1.a:

Please list the safety function(s) from NUREG-2103, Section 1.9.1, "Plant System Organization by Safety Function," associated with each task in Enclosure 2, Table E-2, "In-Plant Task List." If any safety function is not represented on the list, describe any impact on content validity.

SNC Response to 1a:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 1.b:

The submittal indicates that some tasks do not yet have procedures available, but it is not clear to the staff whether other tasks have been excluded for other reasons. Please provide additional information as to (1) why procedures are not available for the tasks that have been excluded, (2) why some (if any) tasks were unsuitable for reasons other than the procedure has not been developed, and (3) whether the exclusion of tasks with an importance rating >2.5 from the list in Enclosure 2, Table E-2 will have an impact on content validity (if SNC determines there is no impact, then ensure an explanation is provided to support the conclusion).

SNC Response to 1b:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 1.c:

Please identify the "validity and reliability criteria" that SNC determined were satisfied, and please describe how SNC determined this.

SNC Response to 1c:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 2:

Enclosure 2, Page 5/14, states, "SNC determined that the number of tasks that was left following this screening process was sufficient to preclude predictability and that no applicant would be able to predict what task would appear on an exam." Please explain the basis for the conclusion.

SNC Response to 2:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 3:

Enclosure 2, Page 8/14, states, "Utilizing cold licensing evaluation methods during the administration of in-plant walkthrough JPMs should not, and does not, alter the method in which JPMs are selected or sampled." Please describe how sampling will be performed.

SNC Response to 3:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 4:

Enclosure 2, Page 8/14, states, "Additionally, for each of the three tasks selected for the in-plant portion of the examination, the incorporation of alternate paths during development of the three corresponding JPMs (either "faulted" or not "faulted") will elevate cognitive levels." Please clarify if the intent is for all three in-plant systems JPMs to be alternate path JPMs.

SNC Response to 4:

SNC is no longer seeking an exemption from the sampling requirements for selecting and developing (JPMs) to support the plant walkthrough portion of the operating test. SNC will adhere to the requirements of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," for selecting in-plant systems JPMs, without modification or deviation.

NRC Question 5:

The cover letter for the submittal, first paragraph, states that "Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) requests NRC approval of an exemption from...and from the requirements in NUREG-1021..." The staff notes that NUREG-1021, ES-301, Section D.4.b states, "In addition, at least one of the tasks conducted in the plant...shall require the applicant to enter the RCA." If the plant has not yet been constructed, then the RCA has also not been constructed, and therefore the applicants cannot enter the RCA. Please identify the requirements in NUREG-1021 that are affected by this exemption request in the submittal.

SNC Response to 5:

The requirements in NUREG-1021 that are affected by this exemption are:

- Form ES-201-2, "Examination Outline Quality Checklist," Section 3.a.(5) which states in part that, "RCA tasks meet the criteria on the form."
- ES-301, Section D.3.d, "Radiation Control," states, "This topic may be covered in conjunction with the JPMs prepared for the in-plant systems walk-through. One possibility is to evaluate these subjects during the required entry into the Radiologically controlled area (RCA)."
- ES-301, Section D.4.b, states in part that, "In addition, at least one of the tasks conducted in the plant . . . shall require the applicant to enter the RCA."

An RCA mockup facility is available for training and evaluation use. The mockup is used by Vogtle 1&2 to train outage workers. The use of the mockup will be incorporated into the performance of at least one JPM selected for the walkthrough portion of the operating test. Standards for entry into the mockup RCA are identical to an actual RCA, and can be used to evaluate an applicant's understanding of, and ability to perform, actions related to an RCA entry.

Individuals being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements will be qualified Radiation Workers as Vogtle 3&4 prior to granting RCA Entry Exemption as a means of conducting in-plant JPMs. As radiation workers, these individuals are being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements, and were previously trained and evaluated for RCA entry. Training included real equipment, electronic alarming dosimeters, radiation work packages, exit monitors, and dress-out facilities. This training is used as a means of ensuring that all radiation workers Vogtle 3&4 are capable of making entry into the RAC.

The Mockup facility is the same facility that is used to train Vogtle 1&2 licensed personnel.

Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4

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Enclosure 3

Response to NRC Request for Additional Information 10

(This Enclosure consists of 6 pages, including this cover page)

13.02.01-2**NRC RAI Regulatory Basis:**

Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) 55.45(b) states that “The operating test will be administered in a plant walk-through and in either — (1) a simulation facility that the Commission has approved for use after application has been made by the facility licensee under 10 CFR 55.46(b); (2) A plant-referenced simulator (PRS) that meets the criteria in 10 CFR 55.46(c); or (3) The plant, if approved by the Commission under 10 CFR 55.46(b).”

The regulations in 10 CFR 55.40, “Implementation,” require, in part, that operating tests be prepared in accordance with the criteria in NUREG-1021, “Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors,” in effect six months before the examination date. NUREG-1021, ES-301, “Preparing Initial Operating Tests,” and ES-603, “Requalification Walk-Through Examinations,” prescribe how job performance measures (JPM) are developed and administered to applicants and licensees for the walk-through portion of the operating test.

Questions:

NRC Question 1:

When in-plant systems JPMs are performed in the plant, the applicant or licensee must demonstrate that he or she has knowledge of the equipment locations, and the plant equipment provides a prop that he or she uses to demonstrate, via discussion and simulation (plant equipment is not operated), whether he or she has knowledge of how the task identified in the JPM is performed.

Enclosure 1, Page 4/11, of the letter from Karen Fili, Site Vice President, VEGP 3 & 4, to the NRC dated April 15, 2016 (ADAMS Accession No. ML16109A013) (April 15 letter), quotes Section 13.2A.3, “Conduct of On-the-Job Training (OJT)” of the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Units 3&4 (VEGP 3&4) UFSAR, which states, “Until plant construction is completed, acceptable methods for the conduct of on-the-job training include discussion, simulation, and use of mockup equipment and virtual reality technology.” Enclosure 1 proposes to use these methods in lieu of performing in-plant systems job performance measures (JPMs) in the plant, which is under construction.

Enclosure 2, Page 3/14, states that “SNC [Southern Nuclear Company] has determined that JPMs can be created from the tasks in Table E-2 and that adequate evaluations can be performed using the Cold Licensing alternative methods.”

The April 15 letter does not describe how the tasks listed in Table E-2, “In-Plant Task List,” will allow an applicant to demonstrate whether he or she has knowledge of plant locations or whether a sufficient prop (e.g., a mockup of a panel and/or plant layout diagrams) exists to be used during the JPM to allow the applicant to demonstrate, using discussion and/or simulation, whether he or she has knowledge of how to perform the task.

Please describe whether a JPM can be developed from the tasks listed in Table E-2 that would (1) include mockup equipment and/or virtual reality technology to provide a sufficient prop for the applicant or licensee to use during the JPM, and (2) allow an applicant to demonstrate knowledge of plant locations (if so, please describe how this could be accomplished).

SNC Response to 1:

The following describe the various methods that NRC Staff may use during the administration of a JPM to allow an applicant to demonstrate whether he or she has knowledge of plant locations and that he or she has knowledge of how to perform the task.

Plant layout diagrams and equipment diagrams can be used as necessary and/or as appropriate to allow an applicant to demonstrate knowledge of plant and equipment locations.

Breaker Lab – Vogtle has a breaker lab that contains 6.9kV and 480V breakers that can be locally operated and racked in and out.

Maintenance Flow Loop – contains generic plant equipment, such as pumps, valves, and instruments for demonstrating the fundamental knowledge of operation and monitoring of plant equipment.

Remote Shutdown Room (RSR) – Vogtle training facilities have installed two remote shutdown rooms that allow applicants to transfer operational control from the main control room simulator to the RSR and operate the plant from the RSR.

RCA mockup – A training environment that includes the required equipment for an operator to sign into a radiation work package, activate their electronic alarming dosimeter, and dress out as required for the task.

Discuss method – using the procedure and plant layout drawings, the applicant discusses the required actions of a task. Discussion can cover required PPE, actions, system response and location. Location information can include specifics such as building, elevation, and room.

Performing and administering JPMs using the cold license methods is substantively the same as the process used for a JPM performed and administered in the plant. In both cases no actual plant equipment is actually operated because neither the NRC evaluator nor the license applicant are independently qualified to operate the equipment. Both processes start by presenting the applicant a task to perform using a cue sheet. After the applicant understands the task, they inform the evaluator they are ready and begin the evaluation. Next the applicant must lead the evaluator to the correct plant location(s) to perform the task while demonstrating all requisite knowledge and abilities to navigate that path. In the cold license process, this is accomplished using plant location drawings vice physically walking to a location. Once the applicant has demonstrated knowledge of how to get to the location in either method, he will simulate performing the procedure. In both methods, this simulation requires that the applicant can identify which components they are operating, provide a description of how they are operated, and explain expected responses. The difference from an in-plant JPM is that the

applicant is using a plant layout drawing and/or picture of the components vice pointing to actual plant equipment. In the cold license method, plant layout drawings and/or pictures of components not directly related to the task will also be made available to the applicant to maintain discriminatory value (i.e. the applicant has the same opportunity to fail as with an in-plant JPM by choosing the incorrect component or by incorrectly simulating the operation of the correct component). The applicant must demonstrate all required competencies on task performance through discussion and interpretation of the cues provided. When the task is complete the applicant informs the evaluator and JPM is completed.

There are multiple locations where this manner of JPM can occur. The applicant can be asked to actually operate components if they exist in either a laboratory, flow loop, or mockup form. In this case the applicant must demonstrate to the evaluator how to locate the plant equipment, and then operate actual components in one of these locations. In the case of a virtual reality method the applicant must navigate to the component and use a controller to perform actions to complete the task. In the case of the RSR, a full Remote Shutdown Workstation (including transfer switches) is part of the simulation facility; the applicant would be able to actually perform the task as if they were operating the plant. The applicant would not receive more information or knowledge regarding the location of the task or how to complete the task due to the use of the alternative methods than the applicant would receive from the prompt that would be used for in-plant JPMs. For example, in an RSR JPM, the only differences are describing how to travel to RSR rather than actually walking to the RSR and, since the RSR is a simulation facility, the task could actually be performed rather than using a description which would be the case for an in-plant JPM. Additionally, if a task were to occur in the RCA, the applicant has the ability to use a mockup to show all necessary skills and knowledge abilities to enter the RCA (including signing onto a RWP and using electronic dosimetry). Next, the applicant would use the discuss method outlined above to demonstrate knowledge of location and skill to perform the task. Alternatively, actual valves may be present at the location of the RCA mockup for the applicant to operate.

Additionally, administration of the JPMs using cold license techniques allows all the provisions in NUREG-1021, Appendix C "Job Performance Measures Guidelines," Section D "Walk-Through Evaluation Techniques" to be met.

In-plant JPMs using Cold Licensing Techniques mirror operating plants in the following ways:

- No equipment is physically operated so the applicant must respond to evaluator provided cues;
- Both techniques require the applicant to demonstrate knowledge required to physically locate the component, including Building, Elevation, and Room Number;
- Both techniques provide sufficient discriminatory value by affording the applicant the opportunity to simulate operating incorrect equipment, resulting in JPM failure;

- The applicant must model through discussion the knowledge and skills to perform the task; and
- In the case of radiological areas the Generic Employee Training Control Point and mock radiation areas can be used to physically display the ability to perform tasks necessary to enter and exit a Radiologically Controlled Area (RCA), navigate radiological controlled areas, including simulated contaminated areas and then proceed like other in-plant JPMs.

The primary change is that the questions Examiners currently ask on location in the plant will now be asked in a location other than "in-plant." The questions will remain the same, but some additional description of plant layout and equipment location may be required of the applicant.

NRC Question 2:

NUREG-1021, ES-301, Section D.4.b states that "In addition, at least one of the tasks conducted in the plant shall evaluate the applicant's ability to implement actions required during an emergency or abnormal condition, and another shall require the applicant to enter the RCA. This provides an excellent opportunity for the applicant to discuss or demonstrate the radiation control administrative subjects."

Please (1) describe whether applicants will be able to demonstrate or discuss the radiation control administrative subjects using alternative methods in lieu entering the actual RCA and (2) describe any alternative methods that are proposed.

SNC Response to 2:

An RCA mockup facility is available for training and evaluation use. The mockup is used by Vogtle 1&2 to train outage workers. The use of the mockup will be incorporated into the performance of at least one JPM selected for the walkthrough portion of the operating test. Standards for entry into the mockup RCA are identical to an actual RCA, and can be used to evaluate an applicant's understanding of, and ability to perform, actions related to an RCA entry.

Individuals being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements will be qualified Radiation Workers as Vogtle 3&4 prior to granting RCA Entry Exemption as a means of conducting in-plant JPMs. As radiation workers, these individuals are being evaluated by plant walkthrough requirements, and were previously trained and evaluated for RCA entry. Training included real equipment, electronic alarming dosimeters, radiation work packages, exit monitors, and dress-out facilities. This training is used as a means of ensuring that all radiation workers Vogtle 3&4 are capable of making entry into the RAC.

The Mockup facility is the same facility that is used to train Vogtle 1&2 licensed personnel.

NRC Question 3:

Enclosure 3, page 2/3, of the April 15 letter states that “classes would need to start well before fuel load.” Given the projected date of fuel load stated in the April 15 letter, please describe any resource constraints or additional considerations that SNC has considered in requesting the NRC begin to administer the exams at this point in time.

SNC Response to 3:

License class is a 24 month process with an industry average of 70% throughput. Only one class is able to use the simulator resources at a time, so classes can only be overlapped to the extent possible that it does not interfere with the Control Room Operations phase. This means that classes must start early to allow for enough Initial License Training (ILT) classes to be completed and provide the necessary number of licensed applicants to allow fuel load to occur as scheduled while accounting for normal attrition rates.

Knowledgeable operators are needed to support the integrated testing program functions such as component testing, system testing, and pre-operational testing. This aligns with the INPO Principles for Excellence in Nuclear Project Construction, principle no. 9, “The Transition to Plant Operation is Started Early” which states “Successful turnover of systems, structures, and components and of the completed plant for a safe and reliable operation is the result of a well-planned turnover process, a fully functional and qualified operating plant staff, and effective implementation of operational processes. Plant operations, maintenance, and engineering personnel are engaged during the construction phase in advance of turnover activities, thereby establishing plant familiarity and ownership of acceptance testing results and equipment maintenance, as well as ensuring compliance with design requirements and the COL.”