

**[Project No. 672]****Issuance of the Draft of the Final Preapplication Safety Evaluation Report for the Modular High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactor**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of Issuance of a Safety Evaluation Report for an Advanced Reactor Design.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing the draft of the final preapplication safety evaluation report (PSER) for the modular high-temperature gas-cooled reactor (MHTGR) proposed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The NRC has been conducting a preapplication review of the MHTGR design since 1986 at the request of DOE and in a manner consistent with the Commission's Advanced Reactor Policy Statement (51 FR 24643, July 8, 1986). The preapplication review process is described in NUREG-1226, "Development and Utilization of the NRC Policy Statement on the Regulation of Advanced Nuclear Power Plants," June 1988, and is conducted before an application is submitted for design approval: preliminary design approval, final design approval, or design certification under 10 CFR Part 52. The PSER is comprised of two volumes: Volume 1, which contains the staff's preapplication review of the MHTGR design and the staff's conclusions on the design from this review, and Volume 2, which contains the appendices to the draft PSER. Volume 2 of the draft PSER is being issued without copies of the documents listed in Appendices C through J to reduce its size. These documents are in the PDR or in NRC Central Files, and are not essential for the staff's discussion of MHTGR licensability and policy issues in the draft PSER. They will be issued with the publication of the final PSER for completeness and will be made available to the public for the draft PSER upon request.

A copy of the draft PSER has been placed in NRC's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, for review by interested persons.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jack N. Donohew, NRC, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-1307.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 14 day of February, 1996.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
Theodore R Quay,

*Director, Standardization Project Directorate,  
Division of Reactor Program Management,  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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**BILLING CODE 7590-01-P**

**Operator Licensing Examination Standards Draft Revision; Notice of Availability and Request for Comment**

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability and Request for Comment.

**SUMMARY:** NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," (formerly "Operator Licensing Examiner Standards") provides guidance for the development, administration, and grading of written examinations and operating tests used to determine the qualifications of individuals who apply for operator and senior operator licenses at nuclear power plants pursuant to Part 55 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR 55). The NUREG provides similar guidance for verifying the continued qualifications of licensed operators when the staff determines that NRC requalification examinations are necessary.

The Examination Standards have been revised to incorporate the examination development process described in Generic Letter 95-06, "Changes in the Operator Licensing Program," including lessons learned during the pilot examination program that began in October 1995. The guidance that was previously contained in NUREG/BR-0122, "Examiners' Handbook for Developing Operator Licensing Written Examinations," has been appended to the Examination Standards, and a number of minor improvements and clarifications that were recommended by industry groups, licensed operators, and NRC examiners and managers have also been adopted. The entire NUREG has been reformatted to more clearly identify the various organizational responsibilities and will be reissued in its entirety.

The staff believes that it would be beneficial to solicit public comments on this revision from all interested parties. The staff is also interested in obtaining an estimate of the burden that assuming responsibility for drafting the initial license examinations will place on facility licensees. Commenters should recognize that presently most NRC examinations are drafted by NRC contractors and that the contractor costs

are passed on to the facility at which the examination is administered. The revised Examination Standards will eliminate contractor support, while the NRC direct resources involved in operator licensing are projected to remain constant. After considering the public comments, the NRC staff plans to brief the Commission and seek its approval to implement the revised process. Pending Commission approval and any additional changes that might be necessary, the staff expects to issue the revised Examination Standards and implement the revised examination process at or near the beginning of fiscal year 1997.

**DATE:** The comment period ends March 25, 1996. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the staff is able to assure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

**ADDRESSES:** Mail written comments to Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

Deliver comments to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:45 am and 4:15 pm Federal workdays. Copies of comments received and draft revisions of NUREG-1021 are available for review and/or copying for a fee in the NRC's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street (Lower Level), Washington, DC. NUREG-1021 is also electronically available for downloading from the Internet at "<http://www.nrc.gov/news.htm#exam>".

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Fred Guenther, Mail Stop O10-D22, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555; telephone (301) 504-1056; and email at "SXG@NRC.GOV".

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 15th day of February 1996.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Stuart A. Richards,

*Chief, Operator Licensing Branch, Division of Reactor Controls, and Human Factors,  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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