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Subject: REGDOC-1.1.3 Licence Application Guide: Licence to Operate a Nuclear Power Plant - OPG comments
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Ontario Power Generation Comments on REGDOC-1.1.3 Licence Application Guide: Licence to Operate a Nuclear Power Plant

The purpose of this e-mail is to submit Ontario Power Generation's comments on draft REGDOC-1.1.3, which is intended to provide guidance to applicants when completing licence applications to the CNSC.

We fully support the CNSC's attempt to provide guidance and clarity for this important process. A concise, user-friendly guide is a valuable tool to help licensees navigate the multi-faceted processes that govern our industry. However, following a joint review with our industry peers, we believe that this initial draft does not yet meet this objective. In an attempt to be thorough for both existing and future licence applicants, CNSC staff has inadvertently complicated the guide and reduced its overall effectiveness.

To help streamline and strengthen future versions, Ontario Power Generation and its peers at Bruce Power and New Brunswick Power have collaborated on a series of suggestions and comments, which are listed in the attached table. We also offer our collective time and expertise to participate in a workshop with CNSC staff to review these suggestions and address outstanding concerns with other documents listed in this guide such as REGDOC 2.3.2, Accident Management Version 2.

Ahead of the proposed workshop, we offer the following high-level observations, themes and suggestions that emerged from our internal and industry reviews:

Separate guidance for existing licensees and new applicants

As we have noted with some previous Regulatory Documents, the CNSC is trying to satisfy too many objectives with a single document. As currently written, this draft attempts to integrate guidance for experienced operators seeking licence renewals with detailed instructions for new applicants requesting their first licence. For instance, there are several references in this guide to REGDOC-2.5.2, which applies to the design of new nuclear power plants. Citing it in areas like Section 4.4.4, Hazard Analysis, unintentionally confuses requirements for new plants with those of existing ones.

While the desire to have a single document for all applicants is understandable, the result is an overly-long guide that serves neither audience as well as intended. Given the very different level of guidance required for these distinct applicants, we recommend that the CNSC either produce separate guides for existing and new licensees or reformat this draft with a common introduction and two distinct appendices with the appropriate level of detail for application for licence renewal versus a new licence.

Guidance on existing requirements versus setting new requirements

Industry as a whole continues to have concerns where on occasion, a regulatory document appears to set new requirements, beyond those in the Act or Regulations, rather than providing guidance on how to apply or interpret those Regulations. In doing so, regulatory burden is increased, while the cost and benefit of such increased burden is not measured to see if these costs result in a commensurate benefit. Examples and suggestions for alternative language are provided in the attached table.

Paraphrasing specific requirements

If a requirement in this guide is covered by an existing code, CSA Standard, or Regulatory Document, we recommend simply referencing the applicable code, standard or document. It is not advisable to paraphrase the requirement. There are numerous occasions in this guide where regulatory requirements are cited and then are described in great detail. This is seen quite often in Section 4 and examples are provided in the attached table. Where requirements are paraphrased from other source documents, there is a risk that the paraphrased text can alter the original intent or lead to misinterpretations. This also introduces a configuration management challenge, where the text in this document could diverge from the text in revisions to source documents. Where CNSC specific expectations do not already exist in other documents, they can be included in this guide.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback on this document. With some clarifications and editorial streamlining, we believe it could serve as a welcome resource for new and future licensees, and look forward to discussing it further should the CNSC agree to conduct the proposed workshop.

If you require further information or have any questions regarding this submission, please contact Mr. Robin Manley, Vice-President, Nuclear Regulatory Affairs & Stakeholder Relations, at (905) 839-6746, ext. 5264, or robin.manley@opg.com<<mailto:robin.manley@opg.com>>.

Yours Truly,

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