

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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February 1, 2018

Debra A. Howland  
Executive Director  
N.H. Public Utilities Commission  
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301

NHPUC 2FEB18pm3:35

Re: IR17-037 Investigation of Gas Operator Qualification Programs & Testing Practices  
Status Update

Dear Ms. Howland:

The Commission issued a Secretarial Letter December 6, 2017 approving an extension of time for filing a report regarding an investigation into the testing practices and operator qualification programs utilized by the gas distribution utilities in this state. The Secretarial Letter allowed Staff to submit a status update of the ongoing investigation.

Accomplished to date:

Staff has issued and received two rounds of discovery.  
Staff has met with the gas operators for two technical sessions.  
Staff has participated in a working group of other state regulators interested in OQ reviews.  
Staff has participated on teleconferences with PHMSA/NAPSR group reviewing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).  
Staff has reviewed the existing FAQs that were developed nearly 15 years ago.  
Staff has researched and reviewed the proposed federal rule regarding Operator Qualification amendments.  
Staff has recently conducted formal plan inspections as a team that were previously reviewed in 2014 for both operators.  
Staff has presented and participated in a 2 day forum in New York organized by the NY Public Service Commission regarding Operator Qualification issues.

Remaining Items:

Staff will issue a third round of discovery for operators.  
Staff will hold a technical session with Northeast Gas Association.  
Staff will continue discussions with other states.  
Staff will continue participation on teleconferences with PHMSA/NAPSR group reviewing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).  
Staff will issue a report to the Commission with recommendations.

To date, Staff has not found any indications of testing abnormalities with the operators nor subcontractors used. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

*/s/ Randall S. Knepper*

Randall S. Knepper  
Director, Safety Division

cc: Docket Service List

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**Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.11 (a) (1): Serve an electronic copy on each person identified on the service list.**

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Docket #: 17-037-1      Printed: February 02, 2018

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
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