

SOPEEC

STANDARDIZATION OF POWER ENGINEER EXAMINATIONS COMMITTEE

5th Class Power Engineers Certification Examinations

A low passing rate and lack of appropriate training course materials for the 5th Class Power Engineers Certification examination initiated a lot of discussion in this year's Interprovincial Power Engineering Curriculum Committee (IPECC) meeting in Regina. IPECC proposed a revised course outline to help define the syllabus.

After consulting college instructors and training providers and receiving feedback from the industry, four major causes for the low passing rate were identified:

1. Many candidates writing the examinations have English as a second language.
2. Candidates generally do not have sufficient operating experience.
3. Course materials are at the 4th Class level.
4. There are the same percentage of questions from technical areas such as welding technology and applied science as there are questions related to boiler and boiler operation.

Certifying competent 5th Class power engineers is critical to pressure equipment safety as these people are normally taking care of small heating plants close to the public. As regulatory bodies, Standardization of Power Engineer Examination Committee (SOPEEC) members are not going to make the exams easier to bring up the passing rate. However, we are committed to make sure that examination questions are clear, at the proper skill level and related to the job.

SOPEEC has taken the following actions to address the four major causes:

1. Examination questions and answers were reviewed and revised to have short sentences in simple English.
2. Training providers are encouraged to include a competency component (practical test / demonstration) in their courses.
3. We are working with PanGlobal Training Systems Limited on revising the 5th Class course material and indicated that the course material will be available by the end of 2007.
4. Starting early 2007, depending on when each local jurisdiction implements the changes, the 5th Class Power Engineer Certification examination will have a higher

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percentage of boiler and boiler operation questions and a lower percentage of questions from technical areas such as welding technology and applied science.

There is a strong demand for Power Engineers across Canada, especially in Alberta. College educators, training providers, industry and regulatory bodies need to work together as partners to improve the quality of power engineers which in turn enhances public safety.

IPECC represents educators, training providers and industry from across Canada. This Committee advises the Standardization of Power Engineer Examination Committee (SOPEEC) on matters related to examinations, curriculum and syllabi for persons pursuing careers in Power Engineering.

SOPEEC is comprised of members from each Canadian jurisdiction delegated by, and responsible to, the Canadian Association of Chief Inspectors. SOPEEC is a Committee to develop and promote the utilization of a uniform national standard for the qualification, examination and certification of power engineers. works with IPECC to enhance the power engineering program throughout Canada.

PanGlobal Training Systems Limited is a company which produces power engineering training materials and was formed in 2003 through a unique partnership formed between SAIT, NAIT and BCIT which have been producing power engineering training materials since 1917.

Jan 02, 2007