

Online training: one way to improve operator competence

Patrik Marklund, Marklund Solutions AB, Sweden

Abstract:

The Swedish Work Environment Authority (Arbetsmiljöverket) estimates 15,000-16,000 boilers in Sweden need continuous or periodic monitoring. They are overseen, for the most part, by personnel with little or no relevant training. The total number of operators is somewhat elusive, but it is estimated at 25,000-45,000 persons.

Historically, there have been many training opportunities for operators, but in recent years, few students have applied. As a result, since the 1980s and '90s, the majority of providers no longer offer training. With fewer students applying and schools discontinuing training, the number of teachers has also declined. In principle, all teachers today are retirees, and the number of relevant training courses has fallen from about 20-30 to three. In addition, the number of students enrolled in these schools is about 30-40 per year in total.

At the same time, a number of incidents and accidents have occurred at power plants that partially or completely depend on inadequately trained operators. The Swedish Work Environment Authority has, therefore, started requiring that all operators who oversee a boiler plant must be certified before

1 December 2020, and the majority of operators need to be trained before they can be personally certified.

Consequently, since 2017, there has been much activity to provide operator training via the internet. The goal of Marklund Solutions' project is to provide complete online training (equal to two years of teacher-led training) for operators in the area of power- and heating facilities.

In our presentation, we will provide an overview of training requirements, our experience in starting personal certification in a branch that has not historically been subject to certification, as well as our experience with online operator training.