

Nuc...*brief & link*

2006-02-17 UT 04:30

NFCC Nuclear Fuel Cycle Consulting

Exelon Nuclear is launching an initiative across its 10-station nuclear fleet to systematically assess systems that handle tritium and take the necessary actions to minimize the risk of inadvertent discharge of tritium to the environment. The assessments will take place in 2006 and will cover pipes, pumps, valves, tanks and other pieces of equipment that carry tritiated water in and around the plants. The initiative is intended to significantly reduce the possibility of a tritium release of the type that occurred in the past involving the lake “blowdown” line at Braidwood Generating Station. The initiative also will establish **new standards for inspections, responses to, and remediation of tritium releases** that have the potential to affect the environment or the public. Press release: <http://www.exeloncorp.com/news/pressrelease/powergen/PR+02+15+2006.htm> About the **Braidwood Station Tritium Analysis** see press release: <http://www.exeloncorp.com/news/pressrelease/powergen/pr+02+03+2006.htm>

The European Commission has issued a formal warning against British Nuclear Group Sellafield. Under the Euratom Treaty, the European Commission has the task of ensuring that accounting and administrative procedures are in place to ensure that nuclear materials in possession of companies operating nuclear facilities in the EU are not diverted from the peaceful uses for which they have been declared. The Commission has found that the accounting and reporting procedures presently in place at BNG SL do not fully meet Euratom standards. This decision results from a series of inspections carried out by Commission inspectors at the Sellafield plant. <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/171&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

URANIUM

Pan African Mining Corp. announced that it has now received full permitting to commence exploration and development of prospective uranium deposits in the first two of four zones delineated in its Joint Venture Agreement with L'Office des Mines Nationales et des Industries Strategiques a **Malagasy State** agency. Release: http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_id=109724

UEX Corp. announced that it has completed its **private placement** for gross proceeds of \$53 Mio (CDN). <http://www.uex-corporation.com/s/NewsReleases.asp?ReportID=129523& Type=News-Releases& Title=UEX-Announces-Completion-of-53.0-Million-Private-Placement>

Novastar Resources Ltd. and **Thorium Power Inc.**, a designer of proliferation-resistant thorium-based nuclear fuels, announced the **signing of a definitive**

merger agreement. Upon consummation of the merger, which has been approved by the board of directors of both companies, Thorium Power will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Novastar Resources, and the combined company will operate under the name Thorium Power Ltd. Press release: <http://www.ccnmatthews.com/news/releases/show.jsp?action=showRelease&searchText=false&showText=all&actionForm=580270>

As of December 31, 2005 the **U.S. uranium concentrate production total was 2.7 million pounds, an 18 percent increase** compared with the 2.3 million pounds produced during 2004. 2005 was the second straight year of increasing production after a long period of decline. A new in-situ leach facility became operational during the 4th quarter 2005. Report of the EIA, statistics: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/nuclear/dupr/qupd.html>

CONVERSION, ENRICHMENT

The NRC has issued a report saying the Honeywell Specialty Chemicals **[conversion] plant at Metropolis, Ill., operated safely during the past year, but the agency will continue heightened inspections** at the facility until further corrective actions and long-term performance improvements are achieved. **Release and more:** <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2006/06-002ii.html>

REACTORS, NPPs, UTILITIES

The government of **Quebec was still considering whether to go forward**

with a proposed \$1 billion refurbishment of the province's only NPP Gentilly, a spokeswoman at the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks said. The government must also decide whether to allow Hydro-Quebec to expand the waste storage facility. The proposed expansion of the storage facility, estimated to cost about C\$130 million, is only the first phase of the proposed C\$1 billion refurbishment, which would allow Gentilly to continue operating until 2035. Without the refurbishment, the company would have to close the station by 2013. News: http://ca.today.reuters.com/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=domesticNews&storyID=2006-02-15T182021Z_01_N15258633_RTRIDST_0_CANADA-UTILITIES-HYDROQUEBEC-GENTILLY-COL.XML

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

The **China National Nuclear Corp. and the China Huadian Corp. signed the frame agreement on co-operative construction of Huian Nuclear Power Project** in Fujian Province in Beijing. As the preparing project in “the national eleventh 5-year plan”, the Huian Nuclear Power Project has been listed into the national nuclear power development plan. This signing of the cooperation agreement means that this project started formally. **Press release:** <http://www.cnn.com.cn/2006-02-15/000224857.html>

US-based **Westinghouse Electric Co has reiterated to Chinese authorities its unchanged commitment** to technology bidding for two nuclear

power plants in Zhejiang and Guangdong provinces, sources say. News from People's Daily: http://english.people.com.cn/200602/16/eng20060216_243251.html

South Africa will spend 580 million rand in fiscal 2006/07 on the development of the pebble bed modular reactor the Treasury said. News: http://za.today.reuters.com/News/newsArticle.aspx?type=businessNews&storyID=2006-02-15T135926Z_01_ALL550381_RTRIDST_0_OZABS-ECONOMY-SAFRICA-BUDGET-ESKOM-20060215.XML

TRANSPORT

NRC has published its report *Spent Fuel Transportation Package Response to the Caldecott Tunnel Fire Scenario*.

The results strongly indicate that neither spent nuclear fuel particles nor fission products would be released from a spent fuel shipping cask involved in a severe tunnel fire such as the Caldecott Tunnel fire. The NAC LWT cask design analyzed for the Caldecott Tunnel fire scenario does not reach internal temperatures that could result in rupture of the fuel cladding. Therefore, radioactive material (i.e., SNF particles or fission products) would be retained within the fuel rods. **Summary, report:** <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/contract/cr6894/index.html>

STORAGE AND WASTE

The U.S. National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Board of Directors at its

annual meeting adopted a resolution which **opposes having the federal government takes title to spent fuel while continuing to store it** indefinitely at reactor sites. Resolution: <http://www.naruc.org/associations/1773/files/ResolutionPacketWinter021506.pdf>

DECOMMISSIONING, CLEAN-UP

A Denver, Colorado federal jury **awarded \$553 Million to property owners living near the Rocky Flats** nuclear weapons plant for property damage and exposure to plutonium contamination. The verdict was rendered against **Rockwell International Corp. and Dow Chemical Co.** Lawyer's press release: <http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/02-15-2006/0004283014&EDATE=> **Dow will appeal** the verdict and is confident of getting it reversed. The Rocky Flats verdict, while disappointing, was not surprising given the court's incorrect instructions to the jury. http://news.dow.com/dow_news/corporate/2006/20060214c.htm

A good **journalistic overview about decommissioning in Great Britain:** "A small group of American companies such as Bechtel and Fluor look set to grab the lion's share of a £50bn British nuclear clean-up program which should get the green light within weeks...." <http://business.guardian.co.uk/story/0,,1710507,00.html>

REPOSITORIES

Paul M. Golan, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, gave an overview of the **status of the Yucca Mountain Project** at the NARUC annual meeting. He concluded that the Global Nuclear Energy Initiative has the potential to improve Yucca Mountain long-term performance. The slides: http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov/pm/program_docs/speeches/naruc-presentation-2006.pdf

ORGANIZATIONS, PEOPLE

President Bush intends to nominate Dennis R. Spurgeon, of Florida, to be Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy). Mr. Spurgeon most recently served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for USEC, Inc. Spurgeon also served in the United States Navy and retired as a Captain. He received his bachelor's degree from the United States Naval Academy and his master's degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

MISCELLANEOUS

The U.S. Department of Energy announced that it intends to seek **competitive bids for the management and operations contract for the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory**

(PNNL), Richland, Washington. The current five-year contract expires September 30, 2007. Press release: <http://www.energy.gov/news/3213.htm>

The U.S. NRC has released its 2005 Safety Culture and Climate Survey. According to the survey results, the NRC improved in essentially all areas as compared to the 2002 survey, with the largest gains in communication, mission and strategic planning, employee engagement, recruiting, developing and retaining staff, and management leadership. **Press release and report:** <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2006/06-025.html>

The German Nuclear Forum held its Winter Meeting in Berlin. You can watch **videos of speeches** on the internet. Among others: Perspectives of **British Energy Policy**, *Carl Gibson*, Head External Affairs British Energy Group; Eröffnungsansprache, *Walter Hohlefelder*, Präsident des Deutschen Atomforums; **Uran** - limitierender Faktor für die Kernenergienutzung? *Joachim Ohnemus*, Geschäftsführer Urenco Deutschland; Die industriepolitische Bedeutung der Energieversorgung; *Jürgen R. Thumann*, Präsident des Bundesverbandes der Deutschen Industrie. Available from: <http://www.kernenergie.net/datf/de/interaktiv/videos/wintertagung2006.php>

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