

Nuc...*brief & link*

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NFCC Nuclear Fuel Cycle Consulting

Germany: The highest administrative court of the state of Lower Saxony dismissed lawsuits aimed at preventing a former iron ore mine in the town of Salzgitter from being converted into a permanent repository for nuclear waste. The lawsuits were brought by local councils responsible for the site of the proposed dump, as well as two farmers who fear the waste could contaminate their land. The court upheld a ruling from the regional authorities in 2002, in which the **Konrad site**, as the former mine is known, was licensed to the state's environment ministry. **No further appeals will be permitted.** The only and last resort for the plaintiffs could be a complaint in Germany's supreme administrative court against the non-admission of an appeal. Following the court's decision the social democratic **Federal Environment Minister Gabriel admitted that the realization of the final repository now has become "very probable"**. But he shared in the criticism of the Konrad site project and called for consensus on a general nuclear waste storage solution. Substantial press release of the deciding court (German): http://www.oberverwaltungsgericht.niedersachsen.de/master/C17799484_N3096431_L2_0_DO_I3070902.html . Political statement of Minister Gabriel: http://www.bmu.de/pressemitteilungen/pressemitteilungen_ab_22112005/pm/36756.php

Areva published its results 2005. Anne Lauvergeon, Chairman of the Executive Board, said: "Net income more than doubled in 2005. Excluding the net gain from the disposal of our FCI Connectors Division, the net result increased by 15%. [...] Our strategic goals are clear. We want to leverage our integrated model covering the entire nuclear cycle to strengthen our position as world leader in the nuclear industry. **We are aiming for one-third of the world market in 2010 and double-digit operating margin.**" Report: <http://www.areva.com/servlet/BlobProvider?blobcol=urluploadedfile&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=Downloads&blobwhere=1141820064050&filename=AREVA+2005+Results+.pdf&csblobid=1033582133999> . **News summary:** <http://www.forbes.com/markets/feeds/afx/2006/03/08/afx2580140.html>

NUCLEAR POLICY

The White House has responded to critics of the India Civil Nuclear Cooperation with a fact sheet. It states e.g.: "At present, only four of India's nuclear power reactors are under safeguards. Under its civil-military separation plan, **India has agreed to place the majority of its existing**

nuclear power reactors and those under construction under safeguards and to place the other associated upstream and downstream facilities that support those reactors under safeguards. Furthermore, India has committed to place all future civilian power and fast breeder reactors under safeguards." The fact sheet:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060308-3.html>

The **European Commission has adopted a Green Paper A Common Energy Policy for Europe**. A Joint article by President José Manuel Barroso and Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs states: "Some Member States are considering the further development of nuclear power. **We do not have the luxury of promoting one to the exclusion of others.**" The article: http://europa.eu.int/comm/commission_barroso/president/pdf/article_20060308_en.pdf Piebalgs presented the Green Paper to the EU Energy Policy and Law Conference in Brussels. His speech: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/06/161&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> Documents from: http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/green-paper-energy/index_en.htm

IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei has transmitted his report on Iran's nuclear program to the UN Security Council, at the close of the Agency's Board of Governors meeting in Vienna today. Speaking to the press, the Director General called for a "cool headed approach" from all parties. Statement and more material: <http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/News/2006/bog080306.html>

United Kingdom: In response to the Government's current Energy Review, the **Sustainable Development Commission nuclear report finds that there is no justification for bringing forward a new nuclear power program** at present. The report *Nuclear power in a low carbon economy* is based on eight new research papers. The report

gives an examination of the pros and cons of nuclear power. Its research recognizes that nuclear is a low carbon technology, with an impressive safety record. Nuclear could generate large quantities of electricity, contribute to stabilizing CO2 emissions and add to the diversity of the UK's energy supply. However, the report says that even if the UK's existing nuclear capacity was doubled, it would only give an 8% cut on CO2 emissions by 2035 (and nothing before 2010). Materials: <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/060306.html>

URANIUM

Canada: The environmental assessment of Cogema's Midwest Project has started. The project includes development of the Midwest ore deposit as an open pit mine; development of a dedicated haul road linking the Midwest development with the existing McClean Lake Operation; and increasing the production capacity of the JEB mill to accommodate the planned rate for milling of the Midwest ore. Information: http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/assessments/EA_06_01_17519.cfm

Kazakhstan: Uranium contracts had never been used as security for a syndicated bank loan until Kazakh state-owned National Atomic Company Kazatomprom launched an unprecedented pre-export financing facility. Press release: <http://www.kazatomprom.kz/cgi-bin/index.cgi?nc81&version=en>

Australia: The Queensland Opposition says it has **no plans to reopen a north Queensland uranium mining lease** if

elected to power. Premier Peter Beattie has ruled out overturning the ban on uranium mining. News:
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200603/s1588470.htm>

The chairman of the **Australia India Business Council**, Neville Roach, has called for Australia **to export uranium to India** once the US nuclear agreement with that country is in place. News:
<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/uranium-export-on-the-cards/2006/03/09/1141701635191.html>

Northwestern Mineral Ventures Inc. announced that it has completed the acquisition of two highly prospective uranium properties in the democratic West African country of **Niger**, one of the world's leading uranium producers. The concessions total 4,000 square kilometers. Press release:
<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/March2006/08/c0428.html>

North Atlantic Resources Ltd. announced that the cabinet of the Republic of Niger has approved and granted the company the 2,000 square km Abelajouad exploration permit.
<http://www.ccnmatthews.com/news/releases/show.jsp?action=showRelease&searchText=false&showText=all&actionForm=583626>

Uranerz Energy Corp. announced that it has signed an agreement to joint venture its eight **Mongolian exploration licenses with Bluerock Resources Ltd.** Press release:
<http://www.ccnmatthews.com/news/releases/show.jsp?action=showRelease&searchText=false&showText=all&actionForm=583353>

NUCLEAR FUEL

Russia: TVEL's new TVS-2M fuel assemblies were approved for commercial production. The Inter-agency Acceptance Commission issued the conclusion related to the lead batch of VVER-1000 fuel assemblies manufactured at Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant. The TVS-2M has improved technical and economical performances, which will make it possible to increase the use of fuel by 4-5 %. The TVS-2M is to be used in a 5-year fuel cycle. Press release:
<http://www.tvel.ru/en/press/news/index.php?id4=87> . A delegation from **Iberdrola** (Spain) Power Company visited JSC Mashinostroytelny Zavod with the aim of studying prospects of future cooperation. Press release:
<http://www.tvel.ru/en/press/news/index.php?id4=88>

REACTORS, NPPs, UTILITIES

France: Suez SA, the Paris-based utility planning a merger with **Gaz de France SA**, has published its 2005 results. Full-year profit rose 48 percent. Suez **generates 37 percent of its electricity in Europe from nuclear power stations.** Results download from:
<http://www.suez.com/finance/english/actualites/detail.php?id=1518&pg=year&annee=2006>

Finland: Fortum's Annual Report 2005 has been published in English. A PDF-version of the printed report is available at
<http://www.fortum.com/document.asp?path=14022;14024;14026;14043;14086;14088;705;706>.

Finland/TVO: The total manpower on the construction site of Olkiluoto 3 is on a slight increase and is at present about 600; ca. 65% of the workers are Finnish. Construction work is currently carried out partly in two shifts. The completion of the reactor building and some large components is still about 6 months behind the schedule. Action has been initiated to **catch up with the schedule.** <http://www.tvo.fi/763.htm>

A trade union is alleging that U.S. government agencies have ignored multiple problems involving the troubled security contractor Wackenhut, a subsidiary of London-based Group 4 Securicor. The company guards seven nuclear sites operated by the US Energy Dept, including some that store highly enriched uranium. Wackenhut also guards more than **half of the U.S. commercial NPPs (31 sites).** The union says that Wackenhut was caught cheating on an anti-terrorism drill, performed poorly on an anti-terrorism drill, was found “systematically” violating weapons inventory and handling policies and guards were cutting corners on patrols. The unions press release and more: http://www.seiu.org/media/pressreleases.cfm?pr_id=1295

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

South Africa: Westinghouse is now one of the investors in South Africa's PBMR (Pty) Ltd. Westinghouse has decided to take over the 15% shareholding previously held by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. The share transfer was part of BNFL's restructuring process and the UK government's decision to sell

Westinghouse. PBMR's other investors are the South African Government, the South African utility Eskom and the South African Industrial Development Corporation. Eskom intends to phase out its shareholding in PBMR Ltd in order to become a client of the technology, rather than a developer of it. **Press release:** <http://www.pbmr.co.za/index.asp?Content=10&MState=DT&Article=71>

STORAGE AND WASTE

Canada: Ken Nash, Chair of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization gave an **overview of Canada's Strategy for long-term waste management** at a Canadian Nuclear Association Seminar. Text of his **speech** is available at: <http://www.nwmo.ca/default.aspx?DN=1534,60,19,1,Documents>

France: The French radioactive waste management agency **Andra has published its new inventory 2006** *Inventaire national des déchets radioactifs et des matières valorisables* . Download from: <http://www.andra.fr/interne.php3?item=actualites>

Ukraine: The president of Holtec International expressed hope for government and parliamentary approval for a planned storage facility for spent nuclear fuel, saying it would ease Ukraine's reliance on Russia. Kris Singh also said the company is prepared to offer a multimillion-dollar loan to implement the project. News: <http://www.ukrainianjournal.com/index.php?w=article&id=2299>

USA: Wastes containing small concentrations of radioactive material

should be regulated based on the risk they pose rather than the type of industry that produced them, as is currently the case, says a new report from the National Academies' National Research Council. So-called low-activity wastes are by far the largest volume of radioactive wastes generated each year in the United States. Some of these wastes come from hospitals, utilities, research institutions, and defense installations where nuclear material is used. Millions of cubic feet of low-activity wastes also arise incidentally every year from non-nuclear enterprises such as mining and water treatment. While low-activity wastes present much less of a radiation hazard than spent nuclear fuel or high-level radioactive wastes, they can cause health risks if controlled improperly. The complicated patchwork of regulations currently governing the management and disposal of low-activity wastes gives federal and state agencies adequate authority to protect the public, but the rules are inconsistent, according to the committee that wrote the report.

Summary and full report from: <http://www4.nationalacademies.org/new/s.nsf/isbn/0309101425?OpenDocument>

DECOMMISSIONING, CLEAN-UP

British Nuclear Group has delivered year end targets of processing 2250 drums a month early at Sellafield. This work involved transferring 200 liter drums from various decommissioning and clean-up activities across Sellafield and the Low Level Waste Repository to the Waste Treatment Complex where they are processed through monitoring and compaction. The resulting compacted

drums known as pucks are then arranged in 500 liter drums that are then grouted and transferred back to the Engineered Drum Stores for safe storage. Feature: <http://www.britishnucleargroup.com/content.php?pageID=33&nID=757>

REPOSITORIES

Australia: The Northern Land Council declared it would welcome a nuclear waste dump after representatives inspected the nuclear facility at Lucas Heights. Nine executive members of the Northern Land Council, which represents the Northern Territory's traditional land owners north of Tennant Creek, said they would defer to science over politics. <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/land-council-relaxed-about-nuclear-waste/2006/03/07/1141701510046.html>

MISCELLANEOUS

A report of an ICRP Task Group addresses the scope of radiological protection. Since virtually everything is slightly radioactive for natural reasons, there has to be a practical level below which material is not regarded as radioactive for radiological protection purposes, and the draft report discusses that level. The **draft of the report was published for consultation:** http://www.icrp.org/docs/Scope_of_rad_prot_draft_02_258_05v06.pdf

U.S. NRC has published its report *Current State of Reliability Modeling Methodologies for Digital Systems and Their Acceptance Criteria for Nuclear Power Plant Assessments*. This report describes the issues that need to be

addressed both in the reliability modeling of digital instrumentation and control systems and in the incorporation of the digital I&C system reliability models into existing PRA models for improved risk-informed decision making with regard to a digital system's contribution to plant risk. The report also outlines the acceptance criteria to be used for the digital I&C system models prior to the implementation in regulatory applications. **Summary and report:** <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/contract/cr6901/index.html>

The **U.S. NRC held its 18th Annual Regulatory Information Conference** in Washington DC. Several **speeches of the commissioners** are available at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/commission/speeches/2006/>

AND FINALLY THIS

Britain secretly supplied Israel with plutonium during the 1960s despite a warning from military intelligence that it could help the Israelis to develop a nuclear bomb. The deal, made during Harold Wilson's Labor government, is revealed in classified documents released under the Freedom of Information Act and obtained by BBC2's Newsnight program. News: <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/politicspast/story/0,,1727978,00.html>

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