

Minutes of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) Meeting held Wednesday, March 24, 2004 beginning at 11:00 a.m. in the Public Hearing Room, CNSC Offices, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

Present:

L.J. Keen, Chair

C.R. Barnes

Y.M. Giroux

A. Graham

M.J. McDill

M.A. Leblanc, Secretary

I. Gendron, Senior Counsel

S. Gingras, Recording Secretary

CNSC staff advisers were: R. McCabe, I. Grant, K. Lafrenière, B. Howden, G. Lamarre, B. Pearson, and R. Ferch

Other contributors were:

- Ontario Power Generation Inc.: C. Jobe
- AECL: J.P. Labrie and P. Allen

#### Adoption of the Agenda

1. The agenda, CMD 04-M12, was adopted as presented.

**DECISION**

#### Chair and Secretary

2. The President took the Chair and the Secretary of the Commission acted as secretary of the meeting with S. Gingras acting as recording secretary.

#### Constitution

3. With the notice of meeting having been properly given and a quorum of Members being present, the meeting was declared to be properly constituted.
4. Since the meeting of the Commission held February 4, 2004, Commission Member Documents CMD 04-M11 to CMD 04-M16 had been distributed to Members. These documents are further detailed in Annex A of these minutes.

Minutes of the CNSC Meeting Held February 4, 2004

5. The Members approved the minutes of the February 4, 2004 Commission meeting (reference CMD 04-M13) without change.

**DECISION**Significant Development Report

6. Significant Development Report (SDR) no. 2004-2 (CMD 04-M14 and CMD 04-M14.A) was submitted by staff. Staff added the following information that arose since the SDR was published:

- Electron Capture Detector: with reference to section 4.1.1 of the SDR concerning an electron capture detector in Saskatoon that may have been sent to scrap, CNSC staff confirmed that it is likely the sealed radioactive source was in the detector when it was sent to a scrap dealer. CNSC staff added that this event was the result of a major breakdown in the licensee's (University of Saskatchewan) procedures. Staff further noted that the causes of that breakdown were identified, and corrective measures have been taken by the licensee to improve the control of the detectors.

In response to the Members' questions on this incident, staff noted that the investigation is continuing in an effort to recover the lost source. Staff further noted that the type of radioactive source involved in the event does not pose a high risk to the public.

- Pickering A: with reference to section 4.1.2 of CMD 04-M14, CNSC staff explained that on March 13, 2004, Unit 4 was being shut down to repair a leak in the E transport pump secondary seal. During the shutdown procedure, an operator went to Unit 3 to perform a standard shutdown maneuver. The error caused Unit 3 turbine to trip, as designed. CNSC staff added that both units have since been returned to power, and that it is investigating the cause of this human error.
7. With reference to section 4.1.2 of the SDR, the Members asked if the Operational Safety and Review Team (OSART) report will be made public. CNSC staff answered that the report will be public, and that it expects to submit the report to the Members at the July 2004 meeting.

**ACTION**

8. With reference to section 4.1.3 of the SDR, the Members asked for an update on the event at Pickering B that involved a hydrogen leak, including an estimate of the amount of hydrogen that was released. CNSC staff answered that the incident is still under investigation, and that it was meeting with OPG to discuss the causes of the incident and the actions that need to be taken. With respect to the volume of hydrogen released, staff noted that an estimate is difficult due to a lack of measurement data. The Members requested that staff provide a further update on this issue at the April 2004 Commission meeting.
9. In response to follow-up questions on whether the hydrogen leak posed a serious fire hazard, and whether OPG is prepared for such fires, CNSC staff stated that while hydrogen leaks do have the potential to cause serious fires and damage, the circumstances of this particular event did not pose a serious risk. Staff added that it is satisfied with OPG's fire protection program which includes periodic exercises for hydrogen fires.
10. With reference to section 4.1.4 of the SDR, concerning the positive power coefficient at the MAPLE reactors at Chalk River Laboratories, the Members asked why AECL had failed to apply the required safety analysis rule when evaluating the performance of the safety systems. AECL answered that this was due to an error which was reported to the CSNC as soon as it was found. AECL added that it will be performing a root cause analysis in order to identify the causes of the error and the measures that need to be taken to prevent recurrence of similar events.
11. Further with respect to the MAPLE reactors project, AECL expressed concern about the length of time CNSC staff has been taking to address and bring closure to other important issues. In response to the Members' questioning about this concern, staff stated that, while it acknowledges AECL's complaint, staff has had to direct its resources to the higher priority issues. Staff further noted that the specific items identified by AECL are near completion.

**ACTION**

The Members observed that the MAPLE reactors project has involved a multitude of issues for which the overall status and relative importance of each is not fully apparent in the staff's regular reports to the Commission. The Commission therefore requested staff to develop, in cooperation with AECL and the Secretariat, a more systematic and meaningful process of reporting to the Commission on the MAPLE project. It is anticipated that a more comprehensive report will be presented at the July 2004

Commission meeting.

**ACTION**

**Status Report on Power Reactors**

12. With reference to CMD 04-M15, staff provided the following update to the status of power reactors since the status report was published:
- Darlington: Unit 1 has been shutdown for a planned maintenance outage and Unit 2 has returned to full power.

**Annual Report on Decommissioning Plans and Financial Guarantees for Nuclear Facilities Owned by OPG**

13. With reference to CMD 04-M16, CNSC staff provided a summary of the annual report provided by OPG on the status of its financial guarantees. This summary was requested by the Members in its *Record of Proceedings, Including Reasons for Decision* (May 14, 2003) in the matter of the Commission hearing held on decommissioning plans and financial guarantees for certain nuclear facilities in Ontario.
14. The Members requested that CNSC staff continue to present to the Commission summaries of the status of OPG's financial guarantees on an annual basis (in the Spring).
15. Noting that the government's decisions on the method and timing for the long-term management of the nuclear fuel waste could have a bearing on the financial guarantee requirements, the Members sought an update from staff on the status of the process being followed pursuant to the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* (2002). In response, staff stated that a government decision on the preferred method for long-term management of nuclear fuel waste is not expected before the year 2006.
16. The Members also questioned whether the financial guarantees would be periodically reviewed and adjusted to take account of any future changes or expansions at the subject nuclear facilities. In response, staff confirmed that any such changes would have to be reflected in the decommissioning plans for the facilities and the cost estimates that form the basis of the financial guarantees. CNSC staff added that new OPG facilities would not necessarily have to be accommodated within the existing financial guarantees; separate financial guarantees, acceptable to the CNSC, could be put in place.

**ACTION**

17. In response to a question from the Members about how interest rates could affect the amount of the financial guarantees, CNSC staff stated that the interest rate is a significant factor that staff closely monitors in its continuing review of the adequacy of the financial guarantees.

**Closure of the Public Meeting**

The meeting closed at 12:00 p.m.

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*Chair*

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*Recording Secretary*

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*Secretary*

## ANNEX A

CMD	DATE	File No
04-M11	2004-02-20	(1-3-1-5)
Notice of meeting held on Wednesday, March 24, 2004 in Ottawa		
04-M11.A	2004-03-09	(1-3-1-5)
Notice of meeting held on Wednesday, March 24, 2004 in Ottawa		
04-M12	2004-03-09	(1-3-1-5)
Agenda of the meeting of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) held in the public hearing room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on Wednesday, March 24, 2004		
04-M12.A	2004-03-17	(1-3-1-5)
Revised agenda of the meeting of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) held in the public hearing room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on Wednesday, March 24, 2004		
04-M13	2004-03-09	(1-3-1-5)
Approval of minutes of Commission meeting held March 24, 2004		
04-M14	2004-03-05	(1-3-1-5)
Significant Development Report no. 2004-2		
04-M14.A	2004-03-17	(1-3-1-5)
Significant Development Report no. 2004-2 – Supplementary Information		
04-M15	2004-03-09	(1-3-1-5)
Status report on power reactors for the period of January 19 to March 8, 2004		
04-M16	2004-03-09	(26-1-0-0-0, 37-0-0-0)
Annual report on decommissioning plans and the financial guarantee for nuclear facilities owned by OPG		