Stakeholder involvement in Canadian Initiatives for Deep Geological Repositories for the Long Term Management of Radioactive Wastes

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Outline

• Overview of Canada’s nuclear regulator

• Canada’s experience with two deep geological repository initiatives

• Stakeholder involvement throughout the life-cycle

Dialogue between stakeholders at each stage
Mandate and Legislative Requirements

• Nuclear regulation falls under federal jurisdiction
• CNSC is Canada’s single nuclear regulator
• Regulate the use of nuclear energy and materials
• Implement Canada's international commitments
• Disseminate information to the public
• Composed of 800 staff and the Commission

70 years of nuclear safety
CNSC Regulates Facilities and Activities...

- Uranium mines and mills
- Uranium fuel fabrication and processing
- Nuclear power plants
- Nuclear substance processing
- Industrial and medical applications
- Nuclear research and education
- Transport
- Export/import control
- Security and safeguards
- Waste management facilities (includes Deep Geological Repositories)

...from Cradle to Grave

E-Doc 5083713
The Commission

• Independent, quasi-judicial tribunal and court of record
• Supported by scientific, technical and professional staff
• In-house or in communities
• Written and/or oral interventions
  • CNSC staff, applicant and interveners
  • teleconferencing / videoconferencing available
• Webcast live in English and French
  • translated for Indigenous communities, as required
• Transcripts and archived webcasts available on-line
• All decisions are made available to the public

*Transparent, science-based decision-making*

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The CNSC’s Regulatory Philosophy

- Regulations are a combination of performance-based and prescriptive requirements
- Licensees are responsible for safe operation by protecting health, safety, security and the environment, and respecting Canada’s international commitments
- The CNSC and licensees are responsible for regular, clear communications and information to stakeholders and the public

...continuous regulatory oversight to ensure licensees are in compliance with CNSC regulatory requirements
CNSC’s Licensing Process

- Continuous Environmental monitoring
- Ongoing Indigenous and public involvement

...ensures applicants are qualified
Engagement throughout the life-cycle

- Public hearing process
- Public meeting – CNSC annual updates on Regulatory Oversight of Radioactive Waste Management Facilities & Initiatives
- Participant Funding Program
- Aboriginal and public consultations
- Extensive outreach and engagement program, including pre-licensing phase
- Requirement for licensees to communicate

Building trust is a continuous process
LONG TERM MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE
Long Term Management of Radioactive Waste

CNSC is responsible for licensing facilities for the interim and long term management of radioactive waste, including geological repositories.

There are currently two separate initiatives in Canada

• Ontario Power Generation’s (OPG) Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) for its low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste (L&ILW)

• The Nuclear Waste Management Organization’s (NWMO) Adaptive Phased Management (APM) approach for all of Canada’s spent fuel
OPG’S DEEP GEOLOGIC REPOSITORY FOR ITS LOW- AND INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE
Ontario Power Generation’s Deep Geologic Repository: Public Hearings

DGR Joint Review Panel (JRP) Hearings

- Held in nearby communities of Kincardine and Port Elgin, ON
- Hearings were webcast
- 33 days of public hearings
- Over 200 public interventions
- CNSC staff made 18 presentations

Many opportunities for public participation
Joint Review Panel (JRP) Report issued May 6, 2015 concludes:

- Not likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects
- Not likely to cause significant adverse effects on Aboriginal interests
Ontario Power Generation’s Deep Geologic Repository Initiative: Current Status

• February 2016: Request to OPG to conduct additional studies and provide additional information prior to making EA decision
• April 2016: OPG indicated additional studies will be submitted at the end of the year (December 2016)
• Federal Environment Minister to render a decision subsequently

No regulatory decisions have been made
Lessons Learned for Stakeholder Engagement

• Early communication with proponent important
• Early reviews of technical documents to be continued
• Building and maintaining relationships with the public
• Independent verification of the technical information and international research should continue

Continuous Improvement
CNSC Involvement
Canada's Initiative for the Long Term Management of Spent Fuel

Objectives of early involvement:

- Build independent knowledge
- Start a dialogue with future applicant
- Communicate the CNSC’s role and responsibilities as Canada’s nuclear regulator
- Clarify CNSC regulatory expectations and requirements
- Focus on key safety aspects
- Maximize national and international collaboration
- Review key research publications from proponents

CNSC involvement will continue and expand as APM approach unfolds
CNSC Involvement
Pre-licensing Phase - Outreach Activities

• Goal: Explain regulatory role and to build relationships
• At the request of communities or Community Liaison Committees (CLC), CNSC will:
  • Host day-long meetings with representatives (typically the Mayor and Council) from the communities
  • Present in the community at a public CLC meeting
  • Hold CNSC Open Houses in those communities
• CNSC also meets with First Nation and Metis Nation
• Activities expanded to meeting with neighbouring communities

*CNSC will continue to build and expand relationships with communities and indigenous groups*

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Lessons Learned

What we’ve learned so far talking to First Nation, Metis Nation and communities:

• Good to get involved early and start to talk to communities
• Important to continue to clarify our independent regulatory role
• Highlight the science being used in regulatory decision making
• Importance of building relationships with communities, First Nation and Metis Nation
• Communities like to meet CNSC technical staff
• CNSC staff learn about communities
Applied lessons learned

Taking what we’ve learned so far:

• Establish a single point of contact
• CNSC Communications Assessment Plan (ever-green)
  • includes awareness building and proactive activities
  • disseminating of factual scientific information for all audiences
• Refining/creating new Outreach tools
Deep Geological Repository Initiatives in Canada

• Ongoing dialogue with Canadian DGR implementers
• CNSC available to talk to communities, Indigenous groups, regional groups, transportation hubs to clarify our role and to build relationships
• As the science-based regulator, the CNSC can foster public trust through:
  • ongoing communication
  • proactive disclosure and transparency
  • disseminating factual scientific information
  • encouraging and providing opportunities for participation

Provide greater clarity on regulatory process and framework
Thank You

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