

JNFL Works to Enlarge and Enhance Casebook Describing Troubles at the Reprocessing Plant

Recently, the Japan Nuclear Fuel Ltd. (JNFL) began deliberations to add supplemental information to its casebook of troubles at its Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant, paving the way for active tests at the plant. The new information comprises incidents taking place at the stage of active testing and thereafter. The number of incidents described will be increased from the current 197 to around 210, and will include such information as the radioactive leak that closed down the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) in Sellafield (U.K.), as well as the details about the design and operation of the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant.

The revisions of the casebook were reported at the October 14 meeting of the study group of the Advisory Committee for Natural Resources and Energy dealing with general inspections at the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant. Currently, the casebook lists 197 incidents of troubles and the corresponding responses made to each. The additional 30 or so incidents to be added include troubles stemming from the handling of plutonium and the increase in radioactivity, as well as the various troubles whose incidence is expected to increase under continuous operation.

On the other hand, mention of 15 cases will be deleted, as they refer specifically to the stage of uranium testing. At the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant, uranium testing has already been completed at each of the major structures.

The work currently going on includes the removal of temporary structures and the closing of cells, baths and tanks, in preparation for general confirmation testing.

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