

## **Hokuriku Electric Files Reasons for Intermediate Appeal against Ruling Shutting Down Shika-2**

On November 16, the Hokuriku Electric Power Co. filed its written reasons with the Kanazawa Branch of the Nagoya High Court for the intermediate appeal that it is making of a court order suspending the operation of Shika-2 NPS. Its argument was that the assumed peak acceleration used for the aseismic design was valid, and that the events and knowledge cited in the ruling hence do not affect safety.

The power utility will set forth its argument at the first oral proceedings scheduled for December 18. The grounds for the appeal encompass: (a) the burden of proof for the allegations, (b) the safety regulation system, (c) the validity of assumed peak acceleration for the aseismic design of the reactor facility, (d) defense-in-depth capabilities, and (e) the revision of the Examination Guide for the Seismic Design of Nuclear Power Plants.

Regarding the allegations and burden of proof, Hokuriku Electric Power asserted that the burden of proof had been placed on the defendant (i.e., itself), and that this was against Supreme Court precedent. The original judgment said that it was unreasonable to assume a M6.5 earthquake with an epicenter directly below the plant for determining the standard ground acceleration of S2. But the power utility asserted that the 13 earthquakes cited in the judgment were not grounds for denying the reasonableness of M6.5. It also asserted that there was no need to evaluate the entire O-chigata fault zone as a series of faults when assuming S2, and that even if the fault zone were active all at once, its ground acceleration would be within the scope of S2.

The original judgment ruled that the "Osaki method" of determining standard ground acceleration would be appropriate. But Hokuriku Electric asserted that its method was an experientially-based method that is widely used in aseismic design, and that as such, it was appropriate. It also said that the case would clarify seismic safety in light of the aforementioned Examination Guide.

On March 24 earlier this year, the Kanazawa Branch had issued a ruling suspending the operation of the Shika-2 NPS, citing problems with its aseismic design. Hokuriku Electric appealed it on March 27.

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