

NUPEC to Be Dissolved

The Nuclear Power Engineering Corporation (NUPEC) will be dissolved early in the upcoming fiscal year (starting April 1, 2008), after preparations and proper procedures are carried out. The dissolution is the result of reforms affecting public-service corporations, including the establishment of the Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization (JNES), an independent administrative corporation.

The company's current activities will be halted by the end of the current fiscal year (i.e., by March 31, 2008). Starting in the upcoming fiscal year, then, the Institute of Applied Energy is to take over those activities of NUPEC related to safety analyses, decommissioning and quake resistance.

NUPEC was formed in March 1976 with governmental, industrial and academic support, with the aim of helping to forge a national consensus on nuclear power and the development of nuclear technology.

The company's engineering laboratories, which were established in Tadotsu (Kagawa Prefecture), Takasago (Hyogo), Isogo (Kanagawa) and Katsuta (Ibaraki), conducted various testing and research programs related to the safety of nuclear power plants and their equipment. NUPEC also opened the Institute of Nuclear Safety to carry out R&D on safety analysis codes. It also implemented cross-checking analyses, which are part of the national safety examination.

Moreover, in order to achieve higher safety levels for nuclear power, NUPEC was engaged in studies on such areas as severe accidents and human factors, reactor aging, and nuclear disaster prevention.

With the establishment of JNES in October 2003, however, that organization took over most of NUPEC's activities involving nuclear safety regulation. Thereafter, NUPEC was downsized, and its other national activities gradually terminated. For example, the Tadotsu Engineering Laboratory ceased operation of a large high-performance shaking table -- the largest and most advanced in the world -- and the laboratory itself was closed.

In preparation for its dissolution, NUPEC has already moved its old headquarters in Toranomon (Tokyo) to the following location:

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