

Tomari NPS to Use MOX Fuel

At a press conference on November 29, President Tatsuo Kondo of the Hokkaido Electric Power Co. expressed the power utility's intention to submit requests to local municipalities for preliminary consent for a program to use MOX fuel at its Tomari NPS. The requests would be made by the end of the current fiscal year (i.e., by March 31, 2008). This is the first time that Hokkaido Electric has referred to a MOX-use program at its Tomari NPS (two PWRs), and it will help meet the nationwide target of loading MOX fuel in 16-18 units by FY2010.

Hokkaido Electric Power, toward the implementation of the MOX-use program, has carried out various public acceptance (PA) activities, including the distribution of pamphlets and the use of the media, along with explanatory meetings and plant tours. President Kondo, determined to promote the program's realization while continuing PA efforts, said the power utility would submit the requests to four municipalities: Tomari and Kamoenai Villages, and Kyowa and Iwanai Towns. After submitting the requests to the local municipalities, it expects to apply for permission from the national government to change a reactor installation. At this time, Hokkaido Electric Power has not announced any other details, including which of the two units will be involved in the program.

As for status of the MOX-use program at other power utilities in Japan, the Kansai Electric Power Co., whose program had been frozen, expressed its intention last month to commence preparatory work. Activities for the program are thus picking up pace nationwide again.

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