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TEPCO's Operational Procedures at Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS During Earthquake Deemed Appropriate

On December 11, the fourth meeting was held of Nuclear and Industrial Safety Subcommittee's Working Group on Operational Management and Evaluation of Soundness of Equipment and Facilities, both of which are under the Advisory Committee for Natural Resources and Energy. There, the members approved a report by the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) on the operational management at the Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS during the time that the Niigata Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake occurred (on July 16, 2007). The report found that various safety functions had been ensured and that operation was generally appropriate, but also raised certain issues and noted lessons learned.

The draft evaluation report included the following points: (1) ensuring safety functions and power sources necessary to stop, cool and confine; (2) nonconformity events; (3) analyses of the fundamental causes of radioactive material release; (4) future measures, etc.

Recognizing that safety functions were secured despite ground acceleration beyond standard ground acceleration, the report noted further that exercises should be carried out to respond multiple problems caused by an earthquake, and also that the number of employees should be increased who are available to handle emergencies.

Regarding nonconformity events, the report found that helpful lessons for other power companies were offered by four events, including the deformation of lagging materials for piping feeding boric acid solution, and breakdowns in monitoring when exiting the management area. It went to discuss the need for measures. Regarding the analyses by the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), of the fundamental causes of release of radioactive material, the report said that the power utility had determined the organizational factors based on identified problems. The report thus deemed TEPCO's corrective measures to be appropriate.

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