



Énergie NB Power

Press Release

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The Point Lepreau Generating Station is seismically robust and safe

Fredericton, N.B. – NB Power takes exception to comments made today about the safety of the Point Lepreau Generating Station (PLGS) by the Conservation Council of New Brunswick (CCNB) Action Committee.

“These comments are misleading and attempt to undermine public trust in nuclear safety regulation and in the Point Lepreau Generating Station,” said Sean Granville, Site Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer. “The nuclear industry is one of Canada’s most closely regulated industries and its safety record is excellent and very transparent to the public. The people of New Brunswick can take great confidence in the safety of Point Lepreau.”

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) regulatory framework relies, in part, on International Atomic Energy Agency guidelines. On the basis of that framework, the CNSC sets licensing conditions for PLGS, which also includes meeting various Canadian standards. The Station meets or exceeds the specifications required under its federal licence. Comments made today by CCNB take highly technical seismic data about Point Lepreau out of context.

“We understand that the CCNB is not in favor of nuclear power and they of course are entirely entitled to hold that opinion,” said Granville. “However, NB Power is fully committed to operating the Station in a safe and responsible manner while meeting all licence and safety requirements.”

As [stated by the CNSC](#), all Canadian nuclear power plants, existing or new, are licensed on the basis of their proven ability to withstand seismic events like earthquakes. Structures and systems have been designed to safely survive earthquakes and the CNSC ensures that all nuclear power plant licensees comply with regulatory requirements. In Canada, reactor sites are geologically screened to ensure they are constructed in a location that is seismically stable.

PLGS is located in an area of much lower seismic hazard risk than Fukushima. It is well within the North American plate and not located at a subduction tectonic plate boundary as is the case in Japan. The Station was designed to withstand potential earthquakes; both the actual structures that form containment and the systems important to safety have been seismically qualified prior to being granted a licence to operate. In addition, a number of upgrades to the plant were made as part of the recent Refurbishment Project to further enhance seismic safety.

When the CNSC renewed PLGS’s Power Reactor Operating Licence in February 2012, the Commission made the completion of a site-specific seismic hazard assessment a condition of the Station’s licence renewal.

Since early 2012, PLGS staff have worked with experts on the site-specific seismic hazard assessment. Seasonal factors make it impossible to complete all data gathering until the summer of 2013, which means the final assessment report will be issued in 2014. Meanwhile, the preliminary findings offer reassurance about the safety of the Station.

Data included in this study is highly technical information, and NB Power – in reporting to the CNSC - relies on independent, highly qualified experts to conduct this type of work. Additionally, the assessment is reviewed by an independent panel of experts.

Preliminary findings of the seismic assessment received from third-party experts in December 2012 indicate that the current understanding of the earthquake hazard for the Point Lepreau site is not substantially different than that presented in a 1984 study. More information on the preliminary findings is available [here](#).

Based on these findings; we are confident that the original safety case for PLGS remains as strong today as it was when the Station was constructed. The Station is sound and will continue to operate safely. New Brunswickers should be assured that NB Power takes its responsibilities to the people of New Brunswick as its utmost priority and puts the safety of employees and the public above everything else.

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