



MEDIA RELEASE

NPP Safety Oversight :Koeberg
REF: 9/1/03/02/22

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

03 February 2022, Centurion, South Africa

NATIONAL NUCLEAR REGULATOR (NNR) UPDATE ON THE REGULATORY OVERSIGHT OF THE KOEBERG NUCLEAR POWER STATION

The Koeberg nuclear power station is operated under the Nuclear Installation Licence, NIL-01 Variation 19 and associated 29 conditions, including specific licensing requirements and controls as prescribed by the NNR. NNR staff monitor activities, confirm regulatory requirements are met and verify regulatory programme expectations including amongst others radiation and environmental protection.

The NNR can confirm that regulatory performance in terms of occupational exposure and public doses from the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station over the past 10 years has consistently complied with the prescribed NNR requirements.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT FOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT REFURBISHMENT/MODIFICATIONS

Modifications to nuclear power plants are in line with the principle of continuous improvement and is a demonstration of good safety culture. Refurbishment projects not only provides opportunities to enhance safety and improve performance but also opportunities to extend the lifespan of a nuclear power plant. The decision to invest in the refurbishment of the Koeberg nuclear power plant is a business decision made by Eskom which does not involve the NNR.

The NNR's role is to oversee refurbishment projects from the initial planning before shutdown to the return-to-service. As part of its regulatory process, the NNR conducts comprehensive technical assessments before approving the installation of modifications such as; the planned replacement of the Steam Generators, the installed Spent Fuel Water Storage Tanks and the Replacement of the Reactor Vessel Heads. Many improvements and upgrades are completed during regular scheduled maintenance outages, throughout the normal operating life of the nuclear power plant. Eskom informed the NNR as early as 2011 of the potential replacement of the Koeberg steam generators. NNR engagement with Eskom on the Steam Generator Replacement Project started in 2013/14. On

18 January 2022 NNR staff granted approval for the replacement of the steam generators on Unit 2 to be installed during the current maintenance outage. This approval was based on the review and acceptance of a comprehensive suite of documents supporting the justification for the refurbishment to the plant, including but not limited to safety cases, safety justifications, safety studies and various modification, installation and test and commissioning packages.

“The regulatory approval of the replacement of the Koeberg Steam Generators does not automatically imply the approval of Koeberg Long Term Operations (LTO). The decision to grant or refuse Eskom’s application for LTO would be subject to further review and acceptance of a separate safety case for LTO. The LTO safety case must consider amongst others aspects of ageing management programmes and associated modifications, periodic safety reviews as well as potential impact of LTO on other safety related programmes.” stated Mr Orion Phillips, the NNR’s Divisional Executive for Nuclear Power Plants.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT FOR KOEBERG LONG TERM OPERATIONS

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) received an application on 10 May 2021 from Eskom Holdings SOC for an extension of the operational life of the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station beyond the current licence term of 21 July 2024 as per the NIL-01, Variation 19.

The application was accepted for further administrative review by the NNR in accordance with the Regulations on the format for the Application for a Nuclear Installation Licence or a Certificate of Registration or a Certificate of Exemption, as published by Government Notice No. 1219 of 21 December 2007. Mr Phillips confirmed that “The application complied with the Format for the Application in terms of section 21(1) of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, Act No.47 of 1999 and was therefore accepted by the NNR.”

“The NNR expects to receive the LTO application safety case by July 2022. This is in accordance with the regulation 3(3) of the Regulations on the Long Term Operation of Nuclear Installations, R266, published on 26 March 2021. The NNR’s nuclear licensing process for LTO comprises a structured process to ensure compliance with safety standards and regulatory requirements. These activities range from administrative reviews, technical reviews, on-site inspections, and public participation as appropriate.” concluded Mr Phillips.

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Definition:

“Long Term Operation” means the operation of the nuclear installation beyond an established time - frame set forth by, for example, the licence term, design, standards, licence or regulations, which have been justified by safety assessment, with consideration given to life limiting processes or features of structures, systems, and components.

About the National Nuclear Regulator

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) is a public entity which is established and governed in terms of Section 3 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, (Act No 47 of 1999). The fundamental objective of the NNR is to provide for the protection of persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage through the establishment of safety standards and regulatory practices suited for South Africa. To this end, the NNR provides oversight and assurance that activities related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in South Africa are carried out in a safe and secure manner and in accordance with international principles and best practices.