

Conclusions by Patrick Majerus

Post-Fukushima stress tests peer review

Public meeting, Brussels, 8 May 2012

The second and last Public meeting on the Post-Fukushima stress test peer review was again well attended with a wide diversity of people in the audience. The two questions and answer sessions and the allocated presentation times permitted an open and constructive discussion. Participants used the opportunity to express their views. They also extensively discussed with representatives of the organizations that played a role in developing and organizing the stress tests and peer reviews, including the European Commission, ENSREG, WENRA and the peer review board.

As the discussions occurred, the president of the meeting took notes and summarized the main conclusions as follows:

- 1) The work achieved since the Fukushima accident has been of exceptional nature. It permitted for extensive analyses in a very short timeframe by operators, regulators and the peer review teams. Also the goals of a common and consistent European dimension in the evaluation of the Stress Test results was reached to a fair extent. Weaknesses, cliff edge effects and plant improvements to enhance safety were identified and appropriate recommendations formulated.
- 2) The quality of peer review reports has given rise to some controversial views. The strong efforts for having homogeneous country reports are widely acknowledged and the large amount of information provided in the ENSREG report and above in the country reports are welcomed. Critics focus on the facts that statements are very general, not indicating which specific plants are directly concerned and that sources of information, respectively cross references, are missing. Despite the efforts to have reports for the public, the terminology used is still rather exclusive. Finally, the input from public meeting in January to the peer review process is not visible
- 3) Some mixed feelings were expressed with regards to the results of the peer review. It is basically confirmed that all plants comply with the current licensing basis. In that context some minor doubts were expressed as to which extend latest and up to date assessments were used to support these conclusions. Some speakers also questioned why no plant would need to be shut down as a result of the stress test. It was nevertheless recognized that the stress test led to identifying of tangible improvements. It is also worth noting that the individual conclusions and recommendations of the ENSREG report were not put into question.
- 4) With the presentation of the ENSREG report and the public discussion of the results, the stress test (safety track) comes to an end. In parallel, some issues that could not be resolved during the short time frame continue to be analyzed in the individual countries. The speakers also again expressed concern on elements that have not been

part of the stress test to be considered in near future. Examples of these are off-site emergency preparedness, human factor and lifetime extension of NPP's, as well as the security track to provide a more complete picture on the analyses performed (airplane crash, intrusion, ...). Besides, most speakers agreed on the need for follow-up activities, while using as far as possible existing structures, such as WENRA for developing technical guidance. Questions were also raised on the supervision of the implementation of recommendations, in particular whether national regulators dispose of a sufficient level of staff and independence and if additional "independent" site visits or inspections were an option. These various suggestions, including an enhanced coordination between the different stakeholders, should be considered when developing a follow-up action plan at EU-level.

It is finally worth highlighting the good quality of the different interventions and the willingness of a constructive dialogue between all involved stakeholders. The exercise has demonstrated the importance of such meetings. The organizations of similar events during the follow-up of the stress test should be considered. The implication of other stakeholders, such as NGO's and the civil society, permits a broader view and allows for meaningful input with the overall goal to continuously improve nuclear safety.

Finally, the president thanks all those who contributed to the overall success of the stress test, in particular the peer review board for managing this novel exercise of a European wide peer review in an highly efficient manner, including organizational efforts as provided by the European Commission.