

**The Nuclear Energy Working Group
North American Security and Prosperity Partnership Initiative
Meeting Report
Nuclear Energy Division, Natural Resources Canada
June 29, 2006 at 580 Booth Street, Ottawa, Ontario**

Participants:

Mexico

Mexican Ministry of Energy: Sergio Ajuria Garza

United States

Department of Energy: John Gutteridge, Elizabeth O'Malley.

Canada

Natural Resources Canada: Sylvana Guindon, Martin, Lamontagne, Tim Church, Jonathan Morris, Steve Bushby, Michael Whitfield

Foreign Affairs and International Trade: Peter van Brakel, Michel Gelinas

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited: Danielle Laurier, David Tregunno

Canadian Nuclear Association: Colin Hunt

University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering: Bill Garland

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission: regrets

Background

As part of the prosperity side of the Security and Prosperity Initiative (SPP), Canada, the United States and Mexico agreed to “enhance nuclear collaboration” through “...sharing of information and best practices on many issues associated with the application of nuclear technology and the safe production and use of nuclear power.” The key milestones that are associated with this commitment include “by December 2005, establish[ing] and hold[ing] first meeting of a nuclear experts group under existing officials-level North American Energy Working Group (NAEWG); by June 2006, establish[ing] cooperative work plan; [and,] by June 2007, explor[ing] and agree[ing] on second round of initiatives.” The first meeting of NEWG working group met on June 29, 2006 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

The meeting was attended by John Gutteridge, Elizabeth O'Malley from the United States DOE, Sergio Ajuria Garza from Mexico, and officials from Natural Resources Canada. In addition, representatives from Canadian industry and academe participated, specifically: Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, the Canadian Nuclear Association, the University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering. Officials from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) were invited, but sent regrets due to a conflict with CNSC Tribunal licensing proceedings.

Country overviews

The meeting began with an overview of each country's nuclear program, followed by a round of questions and answers (presentations attached) which addressed a number of issues, including: research and development, the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, skills and development challenges, new nuclear power plants, public opinion.

Nuclear work force and skills presentations and discussion

Following the country overviews, a discussion of work force challenges took place. Presentations by John Gutteridge (DOE) and Bill Garland (UNENE) are attached. A range of issues were discussed, including: nuclear engineering infrastructure and workforce demographics; university demographic/ enrollment statistics (US); outreach programs for high school students including *The Harnessed Atom* and marketing programs(US); reinvigorating university based nuclear engineering and R&D; relationship between electricity restructuring and loss of in-house utility engineering capacity (Canada); intellectual capital as critical but in short supply; the gap between *where we are and where we want* as considered through three lenses: demographic, institutional, geographic; the need to increase the size of the pie (overall workforce) rather than simply taking a larger slice of the existing pie/ workforce; building / utilizing web portals to enable access to information in a relatively cost efficient and effective manner (E.g <http://canteach.candu.org> <http://www.canteach.candu.org><http://www.nuceng.mcmaster.ca>; www.aboutnuclear.org <http://www.aboutnuclear.org>; IAEA Nuclear Knowledge Portal).

The point was also made that sharing information via the web is a relatively effortless but effective means of building a knowledge base for new recruits and the existing workforce.

Nuclear Energy Working Group Workplan

It was agreed that a number of workshops could be held to follow-up on the day's discussions. The first workshop will focus on workforce challenges which will be scheduled for Fall 2006. The workshop could follow on the Canadian Nuclear Association's Nuclear Human Resources Symposium in Toronto, September 2006, or a meeting of the American Nuclear Society in Albuquerque, November 2006.

Follow-up / Action Items

1. It was agreed that in the spirit of sharing information to build our knowledge base, that the presentations from today's session would be posted on a website. It was suggested that respective Nuclear Societies (CNS, ANS, MNS) could host the presentations; it was likewise suggested that www.aboutnuclear.org could do the same.

2. It was also agreed that we would begin planning the first workshop on Nuclear Workforce Challenges for the Fall, 2006.