

## **issues**

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**From:** <nukenet-request@energyjustice.net>  
**To:** <nukenet@energyjustice.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 08, 2007 11:00 AM  
**Subject:** Nukenet Digest, Vol 793, Issue 1

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NukeNet Anti-Nuclear Network ([nukenet@energyjustice.net](mailto:nukenet@energyjustice.net))

Today's Topics:

1. ALERT!!! STOP AB 719 (No nukes in CAL) Sign onto below letter by Tues. (Roger Herried)
2. Scotland: Response to nuclear accident exercise like 'Keystone Kops' (The Roy Process)
3. Fire, Possible Explosion[s] At Indian Point (Bill Smirnow)

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 Message: 1

Date: Sat, 07 Apr 2007 04:14:31 -0700

From: Roger Herried <[rogerh@energy-net.org](mailto:rogerh@energy-net.org)>

Subject: [NukeNet] ALERT!!! STOP AB 719 (No nukes in CAL) Sign onto below letter by Tues.

To: [rhoffman@animatedsoftware.com](mailto:rhoffman@animatedsoftware.com), [rbull@energy-net.org](mailto:rbull@energy-net.org),  
[radbull@energy-net.org](mailto:radbull@energy-net.org), [nukenet@energyjustice.net](mailto:nukenet@energyjustice.net)

Message-ID: <[46177D17.8040007@energy-net.org](mailto:46177D17.8040007@energy-net.org)>

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Please sign onto the below letter by sending a message to Rochelle Becker at [beckers@thegrid.net](mailto:beckers@thegrid.net)

Dear Chairwoman Hancock

I(WE) am writing in opposition to AB 719, Assemblyman Devore's bill to lift California's ban on the siting of new nuclear plants in California. In 1976 our state had the foresight to question the federal government's ability to create a permanent and safe solution for long term storage of high-level radioactive waste. To undermine this protective legislation could have serious health and economic impacts to California residents on whose fragile and seismically active coasts radioactive waste continues to accumulate.

AB 719 states that:

(f) Current California law prohibits the permitting of any new commercial nuclear powerplants until an approved means of disposal of high-level nuclear waste becomes available. With federal efforts well underway to provide an approved means of high-level nuclear waste disposal, and given that timelines for nuclear powerplant design, permitting, construction, on line operation, and first refueling would likely be in excess of 10 years, by the time a powerplant would be ready for operation, an approved high-level nuclear waste disposal means will be available.

The current ban, PRC 25524.2, which AB 719 seeks to overturn, states that there can be no new nuclear power plants sited in California until:

(a) The commission (California Energy Commission) finds that there has been developed and that the United States through its authorized agency has approved and there exists a demonstrated technology or means for the disposal of high-level nuclear waste.

As of this date, none of those conditions have been met. The Federal government has been trying for a quarter of a century since the passage of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, to wrestle with the unwieldy problem of radioactive waste. When the author of AB 719 writes, "With federal efforts well underway to provide an approved means of high-level nuclear waste disposal" one wonders where the facts are to back up this assumption. The only solution on the table, the Yucca Mountain national repository, has been mired in scientific, administrative and political problems for decades. The Department of Energy has yet to even set a date on which it will submit its application for approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the NRC may be a long way from granting that application, as evidenced by these statements from the Las Vegas Review-Journal of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007:

Ed McGaffigan, a veteran member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

said Monday that the Yucca Mountain program is deeply flawed and that the Nevada nuclear waste site should be scrapped.

"It may be time to stop digging, and it may be time to rethink," McGaffigan said in a critique of the Energy Department program as he prepares to retire from the five-member commission that regulates nuclear safety?.

"I think Yucca Mountain has been beset by bad law, bad regulatory policy, bad science policy, bad personnel policy, bad budget policy throughout its history," McGaffigan said. "Every time somebody has done something to try to speed things up, it has backfired?."

"Each year that passes, we are not going to get any closer to Yucca under the current circumstances," McGaffigan said.

It is therefore, at this time, wholly inappropriate to consider lifting the moratorium on new nuclear power plants in California, as conditioned by PRC 25524.2.

I (WE) urge that this bill, AB 719, be opposed and rejected.

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Message: 2

Date: Sat, 7 Apr 2007 17:13:56 -0700

From: "The Roy Process" <[theroyprocess@cox.net](mailto:theroyprocess@cox.net)>

Subject: [NukeNet] Scotland: Response to nuclear accident exercise like 'Keystone Kops'

To: "Nukenet" <[nukenet@energyjustice.net](mailto:nukenet@energyjustice.net)>

Message-ID: <[002401c77972\\$cc8465d0\\$7c41d048@your03667082de](mailto:002401c77972$cc8465d0$7c41d048@your03667082de)>

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<http://www.sundayherald.com/news/>

heraldnews/display.var.1315298.0.

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exercise\_like\_keystone\_kops.php

Response to nuclear accident exercise like 'Keystone Kops'

Serious flaws have been exposed in Scotland's arrangements for responding to a nuclear accident, with a secret Scottish Executive memo obtained by the Sunday Herald revealing a series of problems during an emergency exercise at the Torness nuclear power station in 2003.

Critics have compared the mishaps to the Keystone Kops, the group of incompetent policemen from the silent film era. But the Scottish Executive has angrily dismissed the criticisms, insisting Scotland was now better prepared.

An emergency exercise, codenamed Yeti, tested the response to a major leak of radioactivity from the Torness nuclear plant on October 30, 2003. It involved 18 public sector agencies, along with the company that runs the East Lothian plant, British Energy.

After a prolonged investigation, the Executive was forced by the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kevin Dunion, to release an official post-mortem report of the exercise. The document, marked "restricted management", made a series of damning criticisms.

It complained that the original notification of the accident to the Executive was a voicemail, containing no names or contact numbers. It took an hour and 20 minutes for the message to reach the correct Executive staff.

Officials also "found it extremely difficult to obtain any factual information about the incident, the extent of the contamination, and the contingency measures being advised", and there was a delay of nearly five hours until enough information was available to brief ministers and the media.

The memo added that Executive officials had difficulty believing what they were being told by the government's technical adviser, Mike Weightman of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. His reassurance that the contamination was not serious "appeared inconsistent" with advice from the Food Standards Agency, and with plans to close the A1 and the east coast rail line, and evacuate the local population.

Weightman and the Executive also clashed over the wording of a proposed ministerial statement.

The memo revealed a rash of communication problems within the Executive, including an out-of-date directory, a failed telephone connection and a problem accepting encrypted data. None of the fax machines seemed to work, it said, and when a laptop crashed there was "no means of exchanging written information".

Many of the problems were centred on the Scottish Executive Emergency Room (SEER) in St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, which is used to co-ordinate the government's response to emergencies. SEER has played an important role in events including the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005 and the heightened terrorist alert that led to the tightening of airport security last August.

David Stevenson, the Glasgow Labour councillor who chairs the Scottish group of nuclear-free local authorities, compared Exercise Yeti to the Keystone Kops. "There needs to be radical improvement to these slapdash emergency planning exercises," he added.

"This raises serious questions about how we would respond in a real accident, emergency or terrorist attack."

Duncan McLaren, the chief executive of Friends of the Earth Scotland, described the effectiveness of the emergency response as "woeful", adding: "Those seeking election in May must realise that the only way to eliminate the risk from nuclear power stations is not build them in the first place."

A spokesman for the Executive said it was "galling" to be asked about an exercise four years ago. It was

"invidious" to suggest that it was relevant to today's situation, he argued.

"The whole point is to learn from them. In fact, we would be worried if they didn't throw up problems," the spokesman said. He added that through ongoing exercises the Executive aimed to "improve the situation and upgrade resilience".

10:17pm Saturday 7th April 2007

By Rob Edwards, Environment Editor

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Message: 3

Date: Sun, 08 Apr 2007 01:28:54 -0400

From: Bill Smirnow <[smirnowb@ix.netcom.com](mailto:smirnowb@ix.netcom.com)>

Subject: [NukeNet] Fire, Possible Explosion[s] At Indian Point

To: Indian Point/IPSEC List <[indianpointsec@yahoogroups.com](mailto:indianpointsec@yahoogroups.com)>, Indian

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Cc: Harvey Wasserman <[harvey@freepress.org](mailto:harvey@freepress.org)>, "Dr. Michio Kaku"

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Message-ID: <[008601c7799e\\$cccd47da0\\$dd722e18@BILLSNEWCOMPUTER](mailto:008601c7799e$cccd47da0$dd722e18@BILLSNEWCOMPUTER)>

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NRC Mandated, Sandia Nuke Labs Study On "Peak Early Fatalities," "Peak Cancer Deaths," "Peak Early Injuries," "Property Damage":

<http://www.mothersalert.org/crac.html>

May I suggest that letters to Governor Spitzer, The Journal News,

NYTimes and other print and electronic media include this report and from whom it emanated. Indian Point is a stationary radiological nuclear weapon, a weapon of mass destruction which Entergy & NRC feel it's fine to deploy at our collective expensense. These people belong in jail.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/07/nyregion/07power.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/07/nyregion/07power.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

Regulatory Commission Downgrades Indian Point Reactor After Fire and Another Shutdown

Suzanne DeChillo/The New York Times

A firefighter from Verplanck, N.Y., at Indian Point on Friday after the plant's team put out a transformer fire.

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By MATTHEW L. WALD

Published: April 7, 2007

WASHINGTON, April 6 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission downgraded its safety assessment of the Indian Point No. 3 nuclear reactor on Friday, hours after a transformer fire forced the plant's second shutdown in a week and the fourth in the last 12 months. The commission said it would conduct extra inspections.

The cause of the fire, which occurred shortly after 11 a.m. at the plant in Buchanan, N.Y., was not clear. The fire was extinguished by an automatic system and by the plant's fire brigade, which sprayed foam. No radiation was released, but people in northern Rockland County, on the other side of the Hudson River, reported smoke and "booms."

Jim Steets, a spokesman for Entergy, which owns the plant, said that operators were unsure if there had been an explosion. The booms might have been from an automatic dumping of excess steam, he said.

The commission's downgraded assessment means that additional inspectors will be sent to look into the cause of the current shutdown and of the last three.

Indian Point is on the east bank of the Hudson, 24 miles north of the Bronx.

Reactor 1 has been decommissioned; Nos. 2 and 3 produce about 10 percent of the state's electricity.

The fire comes at a sensitive time for the plant. The owners are seeking to extend the 40-year licenses on the two operating reactors by 20 years, over the opposition of the Westchester County executive, Andrew J. Spano. They are also seeking to find and stop at least two leaks from spent fuel pools, which are allowing radioactive water to seep into the soil and, presumably, into the Hudson River. The plant is already subject to extra inspections because of the groundwater pollution.

The commission acted on Friday because it was the plant's fourth shutdown since last July 1. The national average is fewer than one unplanned shutdown per reactor per year. "We're going to get rigorously attacked by our opponents," Mr. Steets said.

In fact, Susan Tolchin, Mr. Spano's chief adviser, said that while the fire did not pose an immediate threat, in light of the plant's recent operating history, "this is a cause for concern for us." At a news conference, she also referred to the failure of the alarm sirens to work in a recent test. (The event on Friday was not serious enough to merit their use.) She said that the shutdowns, the sirens and the age of the plants, both of which entered service in the 1970s, "are all reasons why County Executive Spano wants to see the plant shut down."

Studies have shown, though, that building a replacement plant and reducing demand through efficiency would be difficult and costly. In addition, New York State has joined a pact with neighboring states to reduce global warming gases from power generation, which would be much more difficult if the reactors were shut.

The other operable reactor, Indian Point 2, has had three unplanned shutdowns in the last 12 months.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission ranks reactors according to 16 "performance indicators," and both Indian Point plants had been "green," the highest grade, in all of them, until the fire. But in the category of unplanned shutdowns per 7,000 hours of operation, Indian Point 3's grade is now "white," the second-highest. The other categories are yellow and red.

Seven thousand is the approximate number of hours that a well-run reactor will operate in a year. As the federal regulators have demanded improved performance, the threshold for sending in extra inspectors has declined, so that a single "indicator" below the top grade is now sufficient to do so.

To maximize the number of hours it runs, the owners have switched Indian Point 3 to an every-other-year refueling system, and finished a refueling shutdown in record time, 24 days, on March 31. But it shut down again on April 3, before it could reach full power. In the predawn hours, it developed a problem in a pump that delivers clean, nonradioactive water to its steam generators, for heating into steam.

On Friday it was still ramping up to full power when the fire hit. The company declared an "unusual event," the lowest category in a four-level ranking of emergencies, at 11:43 a.m. The event was declared over about an hour later, but the fire was out before the event declaration; Mr. Steets said the operators took a few minutes to decide whether there had been an explosion, which would have moved the incident into the category of unusual event. Being unable to make a conclusive determination, they went ahead and declared the event.

In Rockland County, C. J. Miller, a spokeswoman for the county executive, said that residents of Stony Point had called their local police to report smoke at 11:09 a.m., but that the county did not have any information from Entergy until an e-mail message at 11:36, and then a phone call 20 minutes after that. "There is a repeated lag," she said, in what information is disseminated "and when and to whom. If something happens, we need to act quickly."

Last July, an electrical flaw in the generator caused the plant to shut down. Then workers put metal scaffolding too close to electrical equipment and observed electric arcing, so the plant was shut. A focus of the enhanced inspection will be to see if there are any physical issues or management issues that link the shutdowns.

Juli S. Charkes contributed reporting from Hawthorne, N.Y.

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