

material for the U.K.'s nuclear arsenal. The pond will be drained and demolished after its contents, which include spent nuclear fuel, equipment, and sludge, have been removed.

The canned fuel consists of stainless steel cans containing fuel pins, pellets, and cladding waste from the Windscale advanced gas-cooled reactor. According to Sellafield Ltd., 191 cans containing 2.5 tons of fuel were removed from the pond and transferred to the NNL handling plant. Work is under way to remove the remaining contents of the pond, including metal fuel, which is expected to be cleared by April.

● The National Nuclear Laboratory and the Irvine, Calif.-based waste technology company Kurion announced on November 17, 2015, that they have completed the nonradioactive testing phase for a vitrification plant at the Sellafield nuclear site. NNL and Kurion formed a joint partnership in January 2014 to deploy a full-scale, in-container vitrification plant based on Kurion's GeoMelt technology at NNL's flagship Central Laboratory on the Sellafield site.

The testing phase of the commissioning program was capped off with a paid demonstration for the U.K. Nuclear Decommissioning Authority at the NNL Workington Laboratory nonradioactive test rig facility using simulated Sellafield waste. With testing complete, the system will be disassembled and moved to the Central Laboratory for final commissioning, followed by commercial operation.

According to NNL, the United Kingdom has more than 300,000 t of intermediate- and low-level radioactive waste in

its inventory that may be suitable for thermal treatment with GeoMelt. In 2016, Kurion and NNL plan to increase the total throughput of the system to a maximum annualized processing capacity of more than 200 t and evaluate the installation of additional systems.

Australia

The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) announced on December 6, 2015, that the first phase of its radioactive waste repatriation project has been completed with the return of Australian waste from France.

Hef Griffiths, ANSTO's head of nuclear services, said that the shipment of repatriated waste left France on October 15 aboard the nuclear-rated ship *BBC Shanghai* and arrived in Port Kembla, New South Wales, on December 5. The intermediate-level radioactive waste was transported the following day to an interim storage facility at Lucas Heights, where it will remain until it can be moved to the yet to be built National Radioactive Waste Management Facility. Australia is in the process of siting a permanent repository for radioactive waste.

With a single national facility yet to be established, radioactive waste generated by the country's medical, industrial, and nuclear research activities is currently stored at more than 100 locations across Australia, including hospitals, mining sites,

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