FEATURE ARTICLE

After Fukushima Daiichi: Developments on several fronts
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POWER


SECURITY

U.S.-China nuclear trade pact passes congressional review. Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material ratified by United States. Sen. Lindsey Graham threatens to block IAEA funding over Iran deal. Irradiators containing U.S.-origin sources returned from Mexico; other NNSA developments.

INTERNATIONAL

EDF to own most of Areva’s nuclear power subsidiary as part of strategic partnership pact. Fennovoima settles issue over Hanhikivi-1 ownership. Compensation claims for Olkiluoto-3 are updated. Two halves of Chernobyl New Safe Containment joined. CEO of Brazil’s Eletronuclear faces bribery allegations. Construction begun at China’s Hongyanhe-6. New preferred subtier bidders for Hinkley Point C chosen. Grants awarded in United Kingdom for accident-tolerant fuel work. Vietnam signs framework agreement with Russia.

On the cover: On February 5, 2015, workers at the damaged Fukushima Daiichi plant began filling the inside of trenches—underground tunnels housing pipes and cables—on the seaside of Units 2 and 3 with a special liquid cement, while removing contaminated water from those trenches. According to Tokyo Electric Power Company, removal of water from the Unit 2 trench was completed on June 30, and from the Unit 3 trench, on July 30. For an update on some of the work being done at the Fukushima plant, post-Fukushima developments elsewhere in Japan, and continuing post-accident issues being addressed in the United States, see the article that begins on page 34.

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DOE delays WIPP reopening date. Savannah River Remediation employees prepare Vault 4 disposal unit for coating application. Ohio approves DOE plan to demolish Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant buildings. Spain’s regulator finds interim high-level waste storage site suitable. TRU waste said to be stored safely at Oak Ridge.

ORISE report finds that nuclear engineering degree recipient numbers are leveling off.

DOE opens funding opportunity for advanced reactor concept development.

Export-Import Bank’s future uncertain as Congress entered August recess. Mitsubishi to assist Holtec on SMR systems; other business developments. Holtec chosen to provide dry casks; other contracts. Two Part 21 reports each on, or by, four companies.

NRC denies petition to expand availability of tritium markers. NRC settles prolonged dispute with radiographer. NRC fines Michigan-based medical licensee.

Alert declared at Metropolis Works for UF, leak in Feed Materials Building. Uranium mining bans challenged in Virginia and Québec. Hearing begun on Crow Butte contentions; other licensing news. Denison sells off Mongolian interests; other business developments.

One standard approved, one new standard initiated. Three regulatory guides revised; other documents.