

Natural Resources Canada
June 26, 2006

Minister's Statement on the 2005 NWMO Annual Report

On March 28, 2006, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) submitted its fourth annual report under the *Nuclear Fuel Waste (NFW) Act*. The report highlights activities carried out in 2005 to fulfill key requirements of the NFW Act, notably the submission of its study of options on the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste, as presented in "Choosing a Way Forward." The study outlined the following four options:

- long-term storage at reactor sites;
- long-term storage at a central site with waste stored either above ground or below the surface;
- deep geological disposal, which improves on the previous concept put forward by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL); and
- an adaptive, phased-management approach to respond to the values and the expectations of citizens and to the current state of knowledge.

The report also highlights the financial contributions made to date by Ontario Power Generation, New Brunswick Power, Hydro-Québec and AECL. These contributions are to be used to implement the government approach for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste. Since the NFW Act was passed in 2002, a total of \$880 million has been invested in the trust funds. In the coming years, the monies in these funds will continue to accumulate, increasing public confidence that those who own the waste will assume all of their financial responsibilities.

The independent Advisory Council, established by the NWMO under the NFW Act, continued to provide advice to the organization. In January 2005, the Council, made up of technical and social experts, published its criteria for reviewing the study: comprehensiveness, fairness and balance, integrity and transparency. The Council supports the organization's adaptive, phased-management approach and makes a number of recommendations on future governance: engagement, Aboriginal engagement, and energy policy.

The Nuclear Fuel Waste Bureau within my department, Natural Resources Canada, met regularly over the past year with the NWMO, and continued to oversee the activities of the NWMO, nuclear utilities and AECL. The Bureau also continued to interact with national Aboriginal organizations who submitted their consolidated reports to my office as required under the contribution agreements.

As stated in the 1996 Radioactive Waste Policy Framework, the Government of Canada will ensure that the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste is carried out in a safe, environmentally sound, comprehensive, cost-effective and integrated manner in the best interest of Canadians.

— The Honourable Gary Lunn, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Natural Resources Canada