

Minister's Statement on NWMO's 2008-2010 Triennial Report

As Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, I am responding to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) first Triennial Report consistent with the requirements of the 2002 *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*.

The Triennial Report covers NWMO activities during the period of 2008 to 2010 and includes its work plan for the upcoming five-year period. This comprehensive report provides information to Canadians on the NWMO's progress toward implementing a safe and secure plan for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste in the best interests of Canadians and the environment.

The NWMO's engagement of community leaders, decision-makers, and interested individuals from the outset of this project, is an excellent example of a best practice for initiating a project of this size and magnitude. The NWMO's steady progress over the last three years demonstrates leadership and commitment toward finding a solution for managing Canada's nuclear fuel waste.

While great progress has been made, there is much important work ahead before a suitable site in a willing community is found to host a deep geologic repository for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste. Looking ahead, I expect that the NWMO will:

- continue to improve public awareness and social acceptance of nuclear fuel waste management;
- enhance education and outreach activities to interested communities;
- work closely with communities that come forward to learn more about the NWMO's process, including involvement with surrounding communities;
- address the socio-economic effects associated with a waste management facility in a community;
- strengthen and build solid relationships and communications with provincial, local and Aboriginal governments; and
- work in an open and transparent manner throughout the implementation process.

I would also encourage the NWMO to continue to work with the appropriate organizations and entities involved in transportation to enhance understanding among stakeholders of the safe and secure transportation of nuclear fuel waste.

The *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* requires that Canada's nuclear energy corporations — Ontario Power Generation, Hydro-Québec, NB Power Nuclear and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) — ensure there is enough money to pay for the full costs of implementing the plan. Since 2002, waste owners have been contributing to individual trust funds, which today total more than \$2 billion. The NWMO can only access these funds once a construction or site licence is issued by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

The Government of Canada is committed to monitoring and reviewing the activities of the NWMO with great care and attention to ensure that the organization fulfils its responsibilities under the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*.

The Honourable Joe Oliver
Minister of Natural Resources