

Statement from Tero Varjoranta, Chairperson of ENSREG, following the Group's 20th meeting of 27th September 2012

ENSREG key comments on the preparation of a Commission Communication on stress tests

- It was known to ENSREG that the Commission intended to present its Communication on stress tests to the Council and the European Parliament on 4.10.2012. The Commission had not made available to ENSREG any draft of the Communication. However, the content of a draft was known by some ENSREG members and this draft raised major problems and concerns in ENSREG. As a result the majority of the meeting was taken over with a discussion aimed at providing key comments for the preparation of the Communication.

The following key points were agreed

- The communication should be an accurate and unbiased description of the stress test process and results.
- There should be emphasis on the fact that the stress test exercise was a voluntary and collaborative undertaking. The roles of all parties in the exercise; national regulators, operators and the EC should be clearly identified.
- The scope of the stress test exercise should clearly identify, highlighting what it covered but equally well, what it did not cover. In this respect references to airplane crashes in the context of security and nuclear liability issues were out with the stress test exercise itself.
- The communication requires to be carefully phrased and presented, to avoid undermining public confidence. To avoid confusion the communication should use language and terminology consistent with that already established in the ENSREG report.
- The communication should highlight that the findings of the stress tests did not require the shutdown or closure of any European NPPs, on safety grounds. Nonetheless several areas for safety enhancements were identified at the national level and these issues will be implemented in the context of the national action plans.
- Detailed examples should be avoided in the communication with emphasis being rather placed on generic findings.
- The point should be clearly made that, for the EU members, the stress test process is now complete and that we are now already in the implementation phase. ENSREG will monitor and peer review the implementation of the national action plans.
- Implementation requires to be performed in a safety conscious manner. While actions should be performed without undue delay. Some actions may take longer to implement than others. Arbitrary time frames for implementation are to be avoided as these may give rise to a reduction in overall safety.
- It should be pointed out that the regulators will report to the commission on the progress of the follow-up of the stress test implementation in the context of the existing Nuclear Safety regulation.
- The stress test exercise focused on the effect of external impacts on nuclear safety. It is to be emphasized that operational safety remains the key priority for national regulators.

Doel 3

- A summary status report on DOEL 3 was presented. An open and informative discussion took place primarily between the countries having NPPs with reactor vessels of similar age, metallurgy and production history characteristics.

WG1 work

- ENSREG endorsed the document “Compilation of Recommendations and Suggestions” provided by the Stress Test Board.
- A brief presentation was given on a proposed unified structure for the individual national action plans, with a view to facilitating the later ENSREG review process on this issue. The outline is to be distributed to ENSREG members to facilitate their preparations in this area.

ENSREG Conference

- The ENSREG conference is foreseen for the 11-12 June 2013 in Brussels. Organisational arrangements are on-going to this end.