

Nuclear Safety Account

Background and key facts on Spent Nuclear Fuel Facility at Chernobyl NPP

Following the 1986 accident that destroyed unit 4 at the Chernobyl site, the three other units of the same type at the site were temporarily shut down but had to be restarted a few months later to provide electricity to a strained grid.

The international community, concerned about the safety of Chernobyl type reactors, was ready to support the decision of the young Ukrainian state to permanently close the three remaining units at the Chernobyl site.

In 1995, G7 countries and the EU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ukraine, which offered among other measures the provision of funding for projects necessary for the safe decommissioning of the three units. The assistance provided enabled Ukraine to close the last operating unit, unit 3, in 2000.

Part of the assistance to fund the required decommissioning facilities is provided through the EBRD-managed Nuclear Safety Account (NSA). The NSA has successfully implemented nuclear safety projects in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Russia. In Chernobyl, the NSA funded security and safety measures and two decommissioning facilities. One of these provides for the treatment of liquid radioactive waste stemming from the operation of units 1 to 3 and the other is an interim storage facility for spent fuel used during operation of these units.

Spent fuel is currently stored at the site in an interim wet storage facility constructed in Soviet times (ISF-1). This facility does not conform to modern standards and it appears unlikely that its current licence would be extended when it expires in 2016. Some spent fuel is still stored in the fuel ponds inside the three units, which means that certain safety and operational functions, such as cooling, need to be maintained and that the actual decommissioning or even dismantling of equipment cannot start.

Donors to the NSA agreed in July 2007 to fund the completion of a new facility for the longer term dry storage of the more than 20,000 spent fuel assemblies at the site. The project will make use of existing concrete storage modules and a building for the processing of the assemblies, which includes cutting, drying and fitting into storage containers. The project will be completed in two phases: a design and a construction phase. The design phase, which will include preparation of the documentation for regulatory approval is expected to be completed in about 18 months.

The Nuclear Safety Account has so far received contributions of €286 million from: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Ukraine and the United States.



Concrete spent fuel storage modules

Donors

The following countries are contributors to the Nuclear Safety Account and members of the Donor Assembly:

Country	Amount (€ million)
Belgium	1.5
Canada	11.5
Denmark	4.1
European Community	21.2
Finland	4.0
France	56.9
Germany	43.9
Italy	22.6
Japan	25.0
The Netherlands	4.4
Norway	4.0
Sweden	9.0
Switzerland	12.5
United Kingdom	30.2
Ukraine	4.3
United States	30.9