

New Year Policy Statement

January 6, 2004

Atomic Energy Commission of Japan

1. Basic stance

(1) The Atomic Energy Basic Law sets it as a fundamental principle to pursue the research, development and utilization of atomic energy in Japan, strictly limiting them to peaceful purposes, ensuring safety, and acting on her own initiative under democratic management, and make the results public, and willingly contribute through these activities to international community. We, the Atomic Energy Commission, fulfill our responsibility incessantly recalling this principle, though human society and Japanese society are at a major transition point from that of the day of this Law's enactment, judging from such domestic and international state of affairs as growing interest in the prevention of global warming and the establishment of an effective nuclear non-proliferation system, rapid development of the developing countries, the forecast that Japan's population shall start falling in the near future, and the proposal of transferring power to local governments.

The Commission continues to emphasize the importance of extensive public hearing activities to seek policy proposals and opinions concerning atomic energy research, development, and utilization from broad and diverse sectors, such as experts, the general public, local governments, and political advocacy groups, keeping in mind that there is no authority divorced from democratic procedure. Through these activities we shall make efforts to clarify basic principles for policy selection that meet the people's satisfaction, deliberate each policy proposal as quantitatively as possible from these basis, and decide policies of which basis for decision-making and the main body responsible for implementation are clear.

(2) The Atomic Energy Basic Law stipulates that the objectives of the promotion of atomic energy research, development, and utilization are to secure energy resources in the future, to achieve the progress of science and the promotion of industries, and to contribute to the welfare of human society as well as to the elevation of the national living standard. In order to accomplish these objectives, it is necessary to promote diverse research and development activities, not a few of which require a long time period. Also, not a few of the undertakings implemented utilizing the products of those activities takes several decades from the start to the completion of the disposal of radioactive wastes generated by dismantling of facilities used for them. Accordingly, the execution of these programs and undertakings is accompanied by the risk that the initial objectives might not be attainable due to changes in the surrounding conditions in the course of implementation, failure to obtain anticipated results, delays in the development due to equipment malfunctions, growth of expenses involved in implementation, and other reasons. The Atomic Energy Commission request each entity promoting R&D programs and business undertakings to acknowledge these risks, and take appropriate risk management measures such as flexible reappraisal of the strategy to implement their programs and undertakings. The Commission itself shall continually

conduct policy evaluations and reappraisals, taking into consideration the most recent information and state of affairs so that the possibility of attaining overall objectives stipulated in the Atomic Energy Basic Law is not impaired.

2. Major policy objectives

- (1) Maintain and improve the safety, stability, economy, and environmental compatibility of nuclear power generation and seek the realization of a rational nuclear fuel cycle system, so that nuclear power generation that can avoid greenhouse gas emissions to minimize climate change can continue to be a key source of electricity generation and contribute to the improvement of Japan's self-sufficiency in primary energy supply.
- (2) Promote research and development that further improve nuclear energy utilization technologies and contribute to the expansion of their application areas effectively and efficiently, utilizing international cooperation.
- (3) Promote effective application of radiation and nuclear reaction to the progress in science and technology, to the welfare of mankind, and to the elevation of the national living standard by fostering relevant education as well as research and development activities that support these aims.
- (4) Promote international cooperative activities related to research, development and utilization of nuclear energy that contribute to the welfare of mankind, as well as bilateral and multilateral cooperation activities that involve mutual opportunities for benefit.
- (5) Contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of the effectiveness of the international nuclear non-proliferation system that contributes to greater peaceful utilization of nuclear energy in international society.

3. Drafting of new long-term plans for atomic energy research, development, and utilization

The state of affairs surrounding nuclear energy has changed since November 2000, when the current long-term plan on atomic energy research, development and utilization (Atomic Energy Long-Term Plan) was drafted. These changes are exemplified by progress in the deregulation of electrical power business, advancement of plans to merge JAERI and JNC, delay in the loading of Mixed Plutonium-Uranium Oxide fuel in Light Water Reactors and the commissioning of Rokkasho reprocessing plant, actions to expand nuclear power generation capacity in the USA and other countries through evaluation of the role of nuclear energy to minimize global warming, as well as by increasingly urgent need for reinforcement of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear material safeguards systems.

The Commission therefore shall commence work on drafting a new Atomic Energy Long-Term Plan. As a part of the preparation for that, we shall immediately start obtaining proposals and opinions from all sectors and levels of society and clarify how the Atomic Power Long-Term Plan should function and the issues and controversies pertaining to its drafting, in keeping with the recognition of the importance of having

extensive public hearing activities. Basic studies necessary for quantitative deliberations related to various alternate policy proposals will be also started.