

Appropriateness of “Revised Electric Utilities’ Plutonium Utilization Plan” Published on 17th September 2010”

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Atomic Energy Commission

On 17th September 2010, ten electric utilities announced revisions of their plutonium utilization plans, taking into account the Japan Nuclear Fuel Limited’s rescheduling of the commissioning date of the Rokkasho reprocessing plant (RRP) to October, 2012. Considering the high interest in the utilization of plutonium both at home and abroad, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) considers the revisions of the plans without delay in response to changes in related activities appropriate from the viewpoint of maintaining transparency of the plutonium utilization in Japan.

In their recent plutonium utilization plans, ten electric utilities announced that no plutonium would be recovered at the RRP in FY2010. According to the plan, each utility will fabricate the plutonium which had been recovered by FY2009 and stored at RPP into MOX fuels and will use them at their own nuclear power stations from FY2015 on. Each utility’s plutonium holdings estimated at the end of FY2010 is equivalent to the MOX fuel necessary for 0.1 to 1.0 years’ operation of their respective plants. AEC concludes that the electric utilities’ plans as they now stand are appropriate.

Ten electric utilities change the unit of plutonium holdings in the plans from ‘ton’ to ‘kilogram’. AEC considers it a good practice to improve the degree of transparency of plutonium use.

*:Plutonium that has been recovered from spent fuel at reprocessing plants and stored for loading into nuclear reactors in reprocessing plants, fuel fabrication plants and nuclear reactors.