

Government making progress in nuclear build

PRETORIA: Government is making progress in its engagement with prospective nuclear vendor countries as part of implementing the nuclear build programme.



© prochasson – 123RF.com

"Government continues to make significant progress in its engagements with various prospective nuclear vendor countries as part of the process towards the implementation of the expansion in the nuclear new build programme, as per the stated requirement for energy security based on a sustainable energy mix," said the Presidency on Wednesday, 17 December.

This programme is premised on the Nuclear Energy Policy of 2008, the Nuclear Energy Act 46 of 1999 and the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) adopted in 2011.

"The National Development Plan enjoins us to do thorough investigations on various aspects of the nuclear power generation programme before a procurement decision is taken. These policy prescripts are meant to add 9 600 megawatts of electricity to the national electricity grid and ensure that we keep the lights on in a sustainable manner," the Presidency said.

Recently, government held consultations with a number of nuclear vendor countries including the United States of America, South Korea, Russia, France, Japan and China.

These are the countries that have Pressurized Water Reactor nuclear technology, similar to Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant, situated in the Western Cape. South Africa has been safely using this technology for the past 30 years.

"As part of the pre-procurement phase and preparation for the roll out of the nuclear new build programme, government has entered into several negotiations with vendor countries and has recently signed Inter-Governmental Framework Agreements with the Russian Federation, French Republic and the People's Republic of China. South Africa has also signed Agreements with the USA and South Korea."

The agreements set out potential frameworks of cooperation that each country foresees where or how they can participate in South Africa's new nuclear build programme.

Nuclear vendor parade workshops

They also mark the initiation of the preparatory stage for the procurement process that will be undertaken in line with the country's legislation and policies.

Parallel to this work and as part of the preparatory phase, government successfully concluded the nuclear vendor parade workshops with delegations from China, France, South Korea, the United States of America and Russian Federation during the period October-November 2014.

The nuclear vendor parade workshops entail vendor countries presenting their nuclear technology offerings.

The platform was created for vendor countries to showcase and demonstrate their capabilities on how, if chosen, they plan to meet South Africa's needs for the nuclear build programme including the required 9 600 MW (9.6 GW) nuclear power capacity. The vendor parade workshops form part of the government technical investigation in preparation for a procurement decision.

Senior technical officials from different government departments, energy related state owned entities and academics involved in nuclear and engineering programmes participated in the workshops to engage in robust and open technical discussions with the vendors as well as among themselves.

According to the Presidency, the conclusion of the vendor parade marks a significant milestone in the government pre-procurement phase for the roll out of the nuclear new build programme.

"Going forward government will design and launch a procurement process. Government remains committed to ensure energy security for the country, through the roll out of the nuclear new build programme as an integral part of the energy mix. Government also remains committed to ensuring the provision of reliable and sustainable electricity supply, as part of mitigating the risk of carbon emissions."

The Presidency said the nuclear new build programme will create a massive infrastructure development, thus stimulating the economy and enabling the country to create thousands of high quality jobs for engineers, scientists, artisans, technicians and various other professions, develop skills and create sustainable industries, and catapult the country into a knowledge economy.

"Government remains committed to a procurement process that is in line with the country's legislation and policies," said the Presidency.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>