

Doel, 7 August 2012

## **Extension of the shutdown of Doel 3 nuclear power station**

Inspections of the reactor vessel conducted during the 10-yearly overhaul of Doel 3 nuclear power station yielded findings that require further analysis by internal and external experts. The necessary actions are currently being implemented.

The mentioned analyses are supervised by the Federal Agency for Nuclear Control (AFCN/FANC). Additional information has been requested and will be submitted to the supervisory authorities.

The reactor will not be restarted until all results are in.

This event has no impact whatsoever on the wellbeing or health of the employees, the local residents, or the surrounding area.

Following due analysis, the authorities agreed that for the time being the incident should be classified as a level 1 occurrence on the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES)\*, which ranges from level 1 (anomaly) to level 7 (major accident) and is intended to promote open communication about occurrences at nuclear facilities around the world.

Background information: Doel 3 nuclear power station was shut down for its 10-yearly overhaul on 2 June. In addition to annual maintenance, the safety report also provides for a full check-up of all facilities. The scope of this work, entailing the performance of no fewer than 10,000 maintenance tasks and other checks, necessitated the plant's extraordinary shutdown.

*\*The INES Scale, devised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), was first introduced in the early 1990s. Its purpose is to promote communication about and a correct understanding of the safety-related importance of abnormal occurrences in nuclear facilities. The scale ranges from level 1 (anomaly) to level 7 (major accident). Nuclear operators are obliged to notify the outside world of any aberrations above INES level 2. However, under their open communication policy, Electrabel and the GDF SUEZ Group have opted to properly and proactively inform the public about INES 1 occurrences.*

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