



Doel and Tihange are better protected against extreme natural conditions

Research by the Federal Agency for Nuclear Control (FANC) has revealed that the nuclear power plants in Doel and Tihange are making good progress in implementing the action plan following the stress test.

In 2011, the European Council stipulated that all European nuclear power stations had to undergo a stress test. One reason for this was to see whether nuclear power plants have a sufficient safety margin to withstand natural events (like earthquakes, floods, etc.). On the other hand, Belgium decided to apply the stress test to other scenarios, too, namely those related to human error or malicious behaviour (e.g. air crashes, terrorism, gas explosions).

On Friday March 10, the FANC published the progress reports for 2016. These indicate that by the end of 2016, ENGIE Electrabel had carried out more than 85% of its action plan for the nuclear power stations at Doel and Tihange.

The work done at Doel to help provide a strategic response in the event of a complete blackout at the site and the loss of the ultimate cold source, have been completed. Most of the work at Tihange has also been done.

The action plan also contains various measures, such as anchoring essential equipment to improve seismic resistance. In addition, the internal emergency plan has been updated and mobile diesel units have been procured to guarantee the facilities' autonomy. The investment plan, worth around €200 million, also included the construction of a flood wall on the site, along the River Meuse.

On top of this, ENGIE Electrabel has made progress in terms of its preparations for accident management. Additional mobile lighting and communication tools have been brought in for this purpose.

These investments are all part of ongoing efforts to enhance the safety of these nuclear power stations, even under extraordinarily extreme natural conditions occurring once in just 1,000 to 10,000 years.

In early 2018, the FANC will publish new follow-up reports.

Source: <http://fanc.fgov.be/nl/news/stress-tests-de-grote-belgische-nucleaire-sites-zijn-steeds-beter-beschermd-tegen-extreme-natuurlijke-omstandigheden/874.aspx> (only available in French and Dutch)