

News from the Society of Energy Professionals

Inergi settlement makes offshoring progress



Inergi Local VP Elaina De Luca, at Society Council in 2004

The Inergi local has settled a renewal collective agreement with some “breakthrough language” in job security and offshoring-protection.

“The members seem pretty happy with this,” says Local VP **Elaina De Luca**. “With the preference for contractors, we were fighting against being pushed right off the map. But we did very well.”

Over the last few years, Inergi owner Cap Gemini had made little secret that it found offshoring to cheaper labour pretty attractive. So the Inergi Local focused on job protection and

security from the beginning of negotiations. The agreement was settled in two-party bargaining, when management agreed to the Local’s priorities, if not the exact language.

The settlement will operate for three years, and provides for three, three, and three per cent over those three years, along with standard increases to performance pay and gain-sharing programs. In the crucial area of job security, the agreement provides:

- ◆ “purchased services” language that guarantees that positions longer than six months will be posted to the bargaining unit first, and limits to the use of contractors
- ◆ agreement that no contracting out or offshoring of Society work will occur that results in a reduction of Society-represented staff; if work goes outside the bargaining unit, affected employees are guaranteed meaningful work, including training where necessary
- ◆ Where any employee affected by offshoring voluntarily terminates, a new Society position will be created and filled

In addition, for the first time Inergi has guaranteed that Society-represented employees will get a set percentage of the “sustainment” and “project” work—work that results from the development and/or acquisition of new systems and processes.

“These assignments have been going to contractors,” says De Luca, “but now they’ll be advertised internally first. It’s good for our futures, because our members have been stuck on the old, legacy stuff and not the new, exciting stuff. It is a huge gain.”

The mediation-arbitration agreement has been extended to 2009.

"We're pretty pleased with what the Inergi local has been able to achieve," said Society President Andrew Müller. "We have other locals that feel the pressure from the desire to outsource, and the Inergi local's success will give them something to aim for."

A ratification vote is currently being conducted on the settlement. Votes will be counted on Friday, March 31st.

The Inergi bargaining team included De Luca, Executive Vice President **Rod Sheppard**, Unit Director **Lori Meloche-Walker**, delegate **George King**, and **Wolf Brandt** and **Jack Neil**. Staff support was contributed by Society Staff Officers **Raymond Wong** and **André Kolompar**.

Executive Board Highlights

The Executive Board met on Monday, February 27th, and Tuesday, March 7th. The first meeting was called specifically to discuss the recent settlement with Inergi (see above), while the second was a regular meeting of the Board.

Governance Audit: The Board received a presentation from Fazzari and Associates, the auditing firm retained by IFPTE President **Gregory Junemann** to conduct a governance and financial audit, following the Cristine audit of earlier this year. Fazzari have added the firm of SHS Inc. Management and Planning Consultants to the team, as SHS is more experienced than Fazzari at doing governance audits. Fazzari themselves will do the audit regarding conformity with the Management Control Framework.

The auditors will be conducting interviews during March, and will produce a draft audit report by March 31st. The draft audit report will be discussed in the April 4th Board meeting in preparation for the meeting of Society Council scheduled for April 22nd.

The issue of payment for the audit, currently estimated to be around \$40,000, was also discussed. Board members expressed appreciation to the IFPTE for having assumed responsibility for the audit, and passed a motion undertaking to reimburse the Society's parent organization for any costs above the original estimate of \$25,000.

OSPE: The Board received a presentation from Chris Cragg (former President and Vice President Finance of the Society), who is about to end his term as President of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. OSPE grew out of Professional Engineers Ontario (the body that sets standards and accredits engineers), when questions were raised about PEO's advocacy work for engineers. He outlined OSPE's *advocacy* work on behalf of Ontario's 60,000 engineers, including their very welcome intervention last spring in Hydro One bargaining issues, where they warned the Energy Minister that Hydro One was courting disaster by threatening to lock out their professional employees.

He asked the Society to encourage its engineer members to join OSPE, and recommended that the Society and OSPE work more closely together on public policy issues.

The Board passed a motion in support of both objectives.

Coal-fired generation: The Board received a presentation from **Pat Ramcharitar** and **Dale Lane** (UD and delegate, respectively, from OPG Fossil) regarding the Clean Coal Conference they attended in Calgary. It was clear from the conference presentations, they noted, that emissions-reduction and carbon-sequestration technology exists now, can be implemented in Ontario, and is encouraged by the federal government. They felt the conference was another nail in the coffin of Ontario government's Coal Replacement Plan (CRP).

The Board asked President Müller to prepare a community-based campaign against the CRP.

Bruce Equity: Bruce Power unit director **Bob Wells** presented a proposal from the Bruce Power local for how

to manage the distributions from the Society's investment in the company. He reported that the Power Workers had approved a formula for dealing with their equity:

- ◆ 20 per cent of proceeds will go to the BP local, to be used for philanthropic purposes
- ◆ 20 per cent will be placed in the PWU general budget
- ◆ the rest will be used by the PWU as a whole for philanthropic purposes

The delegates group of the Society's Bruce Power Local had unanimously passed a motion that a similar deal would be acceptable to their local. A motion to set off 20 per cent of the Society's proceeds to the Bruce local for philanthropic purposes was tabled to the next Board meeting, to give Local Vice Presidents the chance to discuss it with their committees.

SPEA Bargaining: Society Staff Officer **Michelle Duncan** and IFPTE Staff Representative **Brian Lawson** reported on the state of SPEA bargaining. The SPEA membership is quite active, partly thanks to the "communications action network" that has been set up. The communication campaign has been underway for some months. Participation in membership meetings is much higher than in the last round of bargaining.

A motion to offer the Society's support "in solidarity with SPEA to help them achieve a fair and equitable settlement," was passed unanimously.

Equity representatives: President Müller recommended that the Board approve the formation of a women's network and a youth network. The networks are envisioned to serve as voices for Society women and youth, and as forums for ensuring that the Society is inclusive of the full diversity of women and youth at all levels of the union. The Network can also pursue their own goals and priorities, in accordance with the decision-making processes they establish for themselves. The Board asked Vice President Membership Rod Sheppard to begin to set the networks up.

Members interested in participating in either network should send an e-mail to Sheppard, copied to President Müller.

Elections: The Board discussed the difficulty caused by the failure of last fall's referendum to ratify changes approved to the Constitution by Society Council. As not enough members cast ballots, the current Constitution remains in effect until the changes can be put before Council again. (In the case of a referendum that fails to reach quorum, the Constitution requires that Society Council decide the question.)

Under the proposed changes, the term of office for unit directors would be increased to three years, meaning no elections this year. That change in the term of office, however, depended the successful ratification of the changes to the Constitution. Since they weren't, elections must proceed this year. While some Board members felt that elections should be postponed, the majority felt that the Board did not have the authority to do so. The matter will be referred to Society Council, and nominations have proceeded.

Executive changes touted

At the March 7th Executive Board meeting, OPGN Local Vice President **Olaf Heilandt** brought forward a number of changes to the Society's executive structure that his local is promoting.

"We have a couple of concerns with the current system," he said, noting that the OPGN and OPGI locals are now under the same collective agreement. "The first is that one Local will hold more than 50 per cent of the votes on the Executive, and the second is that currently Society unit directors don't have direct involvement in the decisions made by the Board. We need to split up the voting power."

He then set out two proposals:

- ◆ Change the voting structure of the Board to the effect that each local with more than 400 members would have one additional Board representative for each 400 members (or fraction)—currently only the Local Vice President carries a Local’s vote, which is more heavily weighted for the larger locals
- ◆ Add three Local vice presidents to the Society’s Executive Committee (currently consisting of the Principal Officers and the Staff Manager), to be elected by the Executive Board

Hydro One Local Vice President **Keith Rattai** advocated that the Executive Board turn its mind to Article 15.1 of the Society Bylaws, which requires Society Council to “consider whether to combine the duties of the Executive Vice Presidents responsible for Member Services and Policy into one position...” He moved a motion that requires the Board to make a recommendation to the next Council.

All three recommendations were approved by the Board.

In order to be implemented, Society Council would need to be presented with specific proposals, and, provided Council agreed, a membership referendum would have to be held before they could be implemented.

Renewables and nuclear the way to go: Patrick Moore at CNA

If we want to reduce the production of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, there’s no doubt we’ll have to pair renewable energy with nuclear energy, says Patrick Moore.

Moore, one of the founders of Greenpeace, and scourge of nuclear weapons tests, seal hunters, and the whaling industry through the 1970s and much of the 1980s, spoke in late February to the annual seminar of the Canadian Nuclear Association. Having fought *against* things

for many years as an environmental crusader, he said, he decided to stop telling people what *not* to do, and try to raise awareness of what we *should* do.

What we *should* do, he said, cannot be to get rid of all the forms of energy that today’s environmentalists want us to abandon, including nuclear, fossil, hydroelectric, and even, for some, wind. That would leave us with 0.5 per cent of our energy sources. “Is this a reasonable approach to global energy policy? To basically be against all but about 0.5 per cent of the existing energy supply? I don’t think so.”

North America isn’t well-placed to end its dependency on fossil fuels, he said, and it doesn’t look like politicians are headed that way anyway. In fact, North America plans to dig itself deeper into the hole. “We’ve spent the last twenty years making sure we’re going to become depen-



Future pro-nuclear activist Patrick Moore, about to be arrested off the coast of Newfoundland, 1970s

Geothermal Compared to Solar Panels*

- \$20,000 invested in solar panels produces about 1500 KWhrs/year or about \$100 worth of energy.
- \$20,000 invested in geothermal produces the equivalent of 20,000 KWhrs/year or about \$1300 worth of energy.
- Both technologies are renewable and can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Geothermal produces about 13 times the energy and CO2 emissions reduction for the same investment. Which would you choose? Which would you promote?

* Approximate for southern Ontario

Moore says geothermal heat-pumps beat solar panels hands down

dent on offshore gas for our heating and electrical system in North America. Rather dysfunctional, don't you think?"

Nuclear energy is the only non-greenhouse gas emitting energy source that can effectively replace fossil fuels and satisfy global demand. There are two kinds of people in the energy thinking game; there are those in Greenpeace who ... think we can phase out 70 per cent of the existing electricity supply, both of which [fossil fuels and nuclear energy] are baseload supplies, and do the whole thing with hydro, wind, and solar. Not possible, because there is another kind of person, like me who thinks that if we're going to phase out fossil fuels in any significant fashion the only solution is aggressive renewables plus nuclear. There is no other known way to do it, and you just have to do the arithmetic.

To close the earth's carbon cycle, he said, we need to combine the following with "aggressive" nuclear power programs:

- ◆ more hydroelectric capacity, in Quebec, the northern parts of the prairie provinces, and the NWT
- ◆ more wind, which is already on the way
- ◆ grow more trees, use more wood for building (in-

stead of steel and plastic)

- ◆ massive use of ground source heat pumps, replacing natural gas and other forms of heating—each house outfitted with one is the equivalent of taking two cars off the road
- ◆ conservation, efficiency, insulating houses better, etc.
- ◆ hydrogen-powered transportation, with hydrogen manufactured using nuclear power, not natural gas

In Ontario, he said, it would have made more sense for the Ontario Power Authority to recommend replacing half the coal-fired generating stations with renewables, and half with nuclear. "Hydro is not going to replace the coal, so it's got to be wind. That means 7,000 megawatts of wind; is that practical under the system we have now?"

Environmentalists who are opposed to just about every form of energy but their favourite renewable don't have a sustainable answer, he said.

[T]here is no getting away from the fact that over 6 billion people wake up every morning on this planet with real needs for food, energy, and materials. Sustainability, which I believe is the next logical step after environmental activism, is about continuing to provide for those needs, maybe even [doing more] for the people in the poorer countries,

August 14, 2003: Was deregulation to blame?

A long-awaited international report on an investigation into the association between "deregulation" and the 2003 blackout may be forthcoming—and may not.

An official of the U.S. Department of Energy has revealed to former Society President John Wilson that a "draft of the report" is "under review," but that a "final release date ... has not been announced."

Wilson says the e-mail he received is worrying. "As Americans say, it could be a 'pocket veto,' where the report just ends up in someone's pocket or on a desk and no action is taken."

The joint Canada-U.S. task force into the causes of the August, 2003 blackout left the matter of deregulation to further study, recommending:

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy) and Natural Resources Canada should commission an independent study of the relationships among industry restructuring, competition in power markets, and grid reliability, and how those relationships should be managed to best serve the public interest.

In 2005, it was announced that the "results" of the "study" would be presented at two "technical workshops," one in Washington, D.C. and one in Toronto. Those workshops were held in September, 2005.

However, it appeared no "study" had been done; instead, the workshops were given a number of "white papers" that certain individuals had been invited to present. The presenters included Dave Goulding, CEO of Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator; Scott Thon, of Alberta's Altalink, a private transmission operator; and other deregulation advocates.

Also participating were Wilson, who is a member of the Ontario Electricity Coalition, and a group of U.S. engineers led by Jack Casazza, an internationally-renowned industrial engineer. They were outraged to find that the "workshops" assumed as a given that "deregulation" and competition would evolve, and the object of the "workshops" was to discuss the best ways to prevent blackouts under a competitive regime. Not so, said Wilson and Casazza: deregulation clearly increases the risk of blackouts.

Wilson said the "workshops" were a sham, and called on the Canadian and U.S. governments to sponsor and fund a truly independent study that would examine whether the public interest in electricity reliability even *could* be

served in a competitive regime.

Wilson says that Jack Layton, federal NDP leader, has written to the natural resources minister to ask that he pursue the study. "All over the U.S. people are really upset with fast rising electricity prices, and reports are coming out saying deregulation has failed," Wilson stated. "In Canada so far there's been little reaction."

U.S. federal court says "no" to Bush union-busting

The IFPTE and others have brought down the Bush administration's plans to gut bargaining rights for U.S. Department of Defense employees.

Union representatives who fought the plan were elated. "Judge Sullivan's ruling eviscerates the core of NSPS, leaving but a hollow shell of provisions that simply cannot stand on their own," said Joe Goldberg, assistant general counsel for the American Federation of Government Employees.

In a landmark ruling issued in late February in San Diego, California, U.S. Federal District Court Judge Emmet G. Sullivan blocked the Pentagon from moving forward on the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). If implemented, the NSPS will move the Defense Department's 650,000 employees from their 15-grade General Schedule pay system to a system linking annual pay raises to "performance evaluations," and sharply curtailed union rights.

According to Bush acolytes, the changes would "make the Defense Department more nimble in the struggle against terrorism." In Judge Sullivan's words, the NSPS failed to ensure "even minimal collective bargaining rights."

The Bush administration's plans to force the NSPS on unwilling federal employees was fought by a coalition of 36 unions representing them, the United DoD Workers



IFPTE President Gregory Junemann, with Society at CBC picket line, September, 2005, now thrilled with anti-NSPS ruling

Coalition, with the IFPTE very much in the lead. They filed suit in federal court last November, alleging that the NSPS violated federal labour relations laws, and that the administration had failed to consult with the unions involved. (The Coalition lost on the second point.)

IFPTE President **Gregory Junemann** was among the jubilant leaders who hailed Judge Sullivan's ruling.

From the very start, this so called National Security Personnel System was a sham. The Pentagon and OPM had no intention on constructively working side by side with the workers' coalition to produce a personnel system that was good for national security, good for the workers, and good for the taxpayers. Instead the Pentagon's leadership made a decision to turn a blind eye to the workers concerns and move forward unilaterally with this ideologically fueled system.

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The unions in the coalition fully expect the Bush administration to appeal the ruling; however, U.S. legal experts believe winning an appeal will be an uphill battle.

Currently, coalition members are in the halls of Congress hoping to put the final nail in the NSPS coffin. They're asking lawmakers to supplement Judge Sullivan's decision with a Congressional stamp of disapproval of NSPS, and to prevent the Pentagon from throwing more taxpayer dollars at an illegal and ideologically driven personnel system.

Bill 14 to make lawyers of us all?

The Liberal government has introduced a bill that some say will give the Ontario Law Society the right to charge dues to union representatives, and discipline them.

The "Access to Justice Act," or Bill 14, received second reading on February 13th. It's a long-awaited piece of legislation that sets out to regulate the paralegal industry, bringing Ontario's "paralegals" under the Law Society umbrella. Paralegals will be charged dues, and will have a minority of representatives in the Law Society's governing body.

The trouble arises from the bill's definition of the "practice of law," which sets out that "...a person provides legal services if the person engages in conduct that involves the application of legal principles and legal judgment..." As NDP MPP Peter Kormos complained in the legislature, "People had better pay close attention to this bill, because there are problems here that are going to cause some real grief for a whole lot of folks."

Kormos says that in setting its net for paralegals, the law casts it way too widely, including union representatives, any salesperson who draws up a contract, mediators, human resources professionals, staff in MPPs' constituency offices, and many, many more.

It's not an insignificant matter. Many of those regulated

by the Act will be required to undertake a two-year course to certify themselves, and pay dues to the Law Society of \$800 per year. This would be onerous indeed. The Society alone has hundreds of representatives who from time to time are called upon to give legal advice that would fall under the bill's definition.

Another problem arises from how the bill defines those who are covered by the Act, and those who aren't—it doesn't. Instead, it leaves the process of formulating exemptions to the Law Society itself, who will set those exemptions **in its bylaws**. OFL researcher Chris Schenk says this is a real concern. "How do **we** have any control over **their** bylaws? We would like the exemptions to be right in the legislation." The OFL has been corresponding with the Attorney General and the Law Society since 1999, asking for an exemption for trade union representatives.

Meanwhile, while the Law Society's final report on the subject acknowledges that an exemption for trade union representatives was **requested**, the Law Society recommended only an exemption for "union representatives appearing in arbitrations."

"The Law Society will be really pleased to consult with the trade union community to come up with something reasonable," says Law Society Policy Counsel Julia Bass. "It is not the intention of the Law Society to interfere with the activities of trade unions."

The Ontario Bar Association's Civil Litigation Section says Bill 14 does "mischief" to the profession. Crucial to this "mischief" is that, though the Act purports to regulate "paralegals," a term which is well-known and legally defined in jurisprudence, it never uses the word, relying instead on a vague definition of "legal services." Not only will this cast union representatives in the mix—a group the government had heretofore not indicated any desire to regulate—it confuses the contrasting statuses of paralegals and lawyers themselves, endangering the profession.

It is expected that Bill 14 will be referred to a committee

of the legislature for hearings. The Society may make a presentation at those hearings.

OPG gets go-ahead to expand waste site at Bruce

A plan to construct an expansion of the Western Waste Management Facility (WWMF) at the Bruce site has been approved by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

OPG owns and operates the WWMF. The expansion is necessary so that low- and intermediate-level nuclear wastes can be accepted from the refurbishment project at the Bruce A site. Waste from other Ontario sites will also be received.

The Commission's decision in OPG's WWMF application does not entail any acceptance of the Bruce A project. Hearings, including for the environmental assessment required and the operating licence changes necessary, will be conducted separately.

Meet Sonia Pylyshyn

One of the Society's newest staff officers is **Sonia Pylyshyn**, who began work as a labour relations officer in January. She's been assigned to work for the Hydro One local.

She comes to us from the Professional Institute for the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC, pronounced "pips"), where she was an employment relations officer. She says her PIPSC work was "pretty much the same job" as she does for the Society, and for similar types of professional employees, at the Canada Revenue Agency, Industry Canada, and others.

Say what you like about Canada Revenue auditors, she says, "They were an intense group, probably the most activist of our members. They were treated very badly—it



Sonia Pylyshyn joined the Society in January. Welcome, Sonia!

was like an auditing factory—they could be penalized for failing to meet “productivity targets.”

The Society was in the news a lot last summer; one of the rewards was we got Sonia. “I would probably still be there,” she says, “but I was watching the Hydro One strike, and I found the Society members to be pretty impressive, it seemed like a pretty good place to work.”

Sonia’s a lawyer, her law degree from the University of Toronto. Earlier in life, she was an English lit major, her interest in Virginia Woolf propelling her to a Master’s degree. But the academic life was not to be—two weeks from beginning her PhD, she decided she “didn’t want to spend the rest of my life in the library.”

She went back to London, where she’d gone to high school, and got a job in community development, running programs for refugees and immigrants. It was in the work there—and the necessary interactions with lawyers—that she formed the view that a law degree would be useful in getting things done. “I wanted to keep doing the kind of community work I was doing, only with more tools.”

That led her to law school, where she did extracurricular work in a community legal clinic, and found her interests were in labour law, not torts or taxation law. “I think I spent more time working in the clinic than I ever did in class.”

She lives in the east end of Toronto, with her husband Fidel, and two daughters, aged three and six. For relaxation, she says she’s “addicted” to yoga.

The world’s electricity:

South African utility’s troubles may lead to regulator action

(with reports from Eskom, Business Day (Financial Times), the Cape Argus, the Port Elizabeth Herald, Fin24TV, South African Press Association, Pan African News Agency, and Engineering News—all of South Africa—and the Namibian, the BBC (U.K.), and the Uranium Information Centre in Australia)

South Africa’s electricity regulator is considering taking over planning for the country’s future electricity needs from the country’s utility, Eskom.

Eskom has been through quite a series of troubles of late. The Western Cape (see map) and the city of Johannesburg have been blacked out several times over the last few months, mostly due to problems with the Koeberg nuclear generating station, Eskom’s transmission infrastructure, and dilapidated municipal distribution systems (not owned by Eskom).

It’s estimated that South Africa is 300MW short during peak periods, even with implementation of measures to save 400MW of power. Eskom has set up 500 management teams to implement energy conservation programs, including an efficient light programme, advice on pool-pump settings, and other conservation measures.

“We are appealing to the electricity users in the Cape to participate in the energy savings drive so as to avoid load shedding,” said Eskom CEO Thulani Gcabashe.

Eskom Power Stations



Yesterday, President Thabo Mbeki waded into the fray, asserting that there is “no crisis,” denying that South Africa had “failed to meet national electricity capacity needs,” and refusing to commission a public inquiry into the situation.

It all started last November when a loose bolt brought down Koeberg’s Unit 1, a 900MW nuclear generator. Unit 1 has been out of service since, and Gcabashe says it may

be for two or three months more. (The rotor for the generator had to be sourced from *Electricité de France*.) It’s a white-knuckler—Unit 2 is scheduled to be brought down for refuelling in May.

Eskom likely can’t afford to have both units down. Most generation other than Koeberg is in the northeast, while load is concentrated on the coast, especially Cape Town, in Western Cape.

Publicly owned Eskom is one of the world's largest utilities. It generates over 95 per cent of South Africa's electricity—its nominal capacity is 37,000 megawatts—and more than half the electricity generated in all of Africa. South Africa is a member of the Southern African Power Pool, and is interconnected with Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, among others. Zimbabwe and Namibia have also experienced blackouts due to Eskom outages.

Currently South Africa's peak demand in the winter is about 35,000MW.

The lion's share of Eskom's generation capacity is coal-fired, with gas, hydro, and pumped storage contributing about 2,000MW, and Koeberg another 1,900MW.

South Africa's economy is growing quickly, and electricity demand along with it. A few years ago, demand was expected to meet supply by about 2020, but it is now predicted that this will occur in 2008—original forecasts were based on annual growth of three per cent, but real growth has been between five and six. In addition, electrification programs have added four million households to the grid since 1995.

The crisis appears to have its roots in the African National Congress's dramatic turn toward privatization and deregulation in the mid-1990s. At the time, South Africa's electricity prices were among the lowest in the world, thanks to massive overbuilding in the 1980s and the low price of coal. The last generator to be built—Koeberg—had come into service in 1985, and the government wanted any new ones to be built by the private sector. In 2000, the ANC government decided that customers would be given the right to choose, competition would be introduced, Eskom would be unbundled and a market would set prices.

Then the world's plans for electricity liberalization were hit with the California debacle (along with Brazil and Indonesia), Enron, and the North American collapse of energy trading. With South Africa's surplus capacity and low prices, the country couldn't attract private investment.

Plans to sell off up to 30 per cent of Eskom appear to be on hold. Eskom is returning to service three coal-fired power stations that had been mothballed, the last of these to be back in service in 2008. Also, while there's been no announcement of a change in direction, and while the government announced on March 10th that it was seeking private bidders for 1,000MW of gas plants, Eskom is actively planning new build.

On March 27th, Gcabashe told a conference that growing demand would require 65,000MW of capacity by 2024. Currently, he said, 7,000MW of projects have been approved and are in the construction phase. Projects for another 18,000MW are in the pre-feasibility phase, and another 10,000MW in the feasibility-study phase.

Also, Eskom has announced it's conducting feasibility studies for building another nuclear generating station, bringing swift condemnation from Earthlife, a South African anti-nuclear group.

All this could be put on hold, however, as the National Electricity Regulator (NER) has launched "an investigation into Eskom's planning and the series of power failures in the Western Cape to determine whether the electricity utility had failed to meet its licensing requirements."

NER executive Naresh Singh says the regulator now aims to take integrated resource planning completely out of the hands of Eskom.

Society Newscast 2005:09

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