

News from the Society of Energy Professionals

Inergi Local gets new agreement



Cheryl Cottrill, Executive Director of Women in Nuclear, addressed women attending the Women's Committee Breakfast, held in conjunction with Society Council.

The Inergi Local has reached what could be a breakthrough agreement with Capgemini. Local leaders hope the agreement signals improvement in a relationship that has been fractious in the recent past.

"We seemed to be at loggerheads," Inergi Local VP **Elaina De Luca** told Society Council on November 3rd. "But something must have happened. I think they saw our convictions, that we really wanted to secure a future for Inergi. That was our prime interest."

The agreement was reached late in the evening of Saturday, November 1st.

Society leaders believe the agreement, reached in two-party negotiations, is a harbinger for an improved relationship between the two parties. To the Society, a good relationship is seen as key—Inergi's contract with Hydro One terminates in 2012. "We had clear direction from our members—the uncertainty of the future had to be addressed," said De Luca.

Details of the settlement will not be released until members of the Inergi Local have had the chance to ratify them. Membership meetings to present the settlement will be taking place in the week of November 17th, and ballots from the ratification vote are expected to be counted on December 9th.

"We told Cap we'd like to be in a position to help them with the Hydro One contract," said Society President **Rod Sheppard**, who headed the Society bargaining team. "But the Local members didn't have any confidence their jobs would be there in 2012."

De Luca told Society Council representatives that the 90 per cent participation rate in the Society's bargaining survey was a "strong tool" in negotiations. "When we told management only five per cent of our members believed Cap would be able to retain the Hydro One work, they had to sit up and take notice."

De Luca said her members will be "pleasantly surprised" by the settlement. Real gains had been made, she said, in the areas of compensation, job security, the health of the pension fund, continuation of protection against offshoring, and other important areas. No concessions have been agreed to.

The Society bargaining team included Sheppard, De Luca, unit directors **Dianne Mowat** and **Andre Ramsaroop**, and



Inergi Local Bargaining Team (l to r): Andre Ramsaroop, Raymond Wong, Rod Sheppard, André Kolompar, Zvi Waxman, Elaina De Luca, Mike Armstrong, Dianne Mowat

delegates **Mike Armstrong** and **Zvi Vaxman**. Staff support was provided by Staff Officers **Raymond Wong** and **André Kolompar**.

In a special meeting of the Executive Board held November 10th, the Board unanimously supported the settlement.

Details of the agreement will be available in the next *Newscast*.

Council OKs strategic framework

The Society's first priority should be internal organizing, says Society Council.

In its 2008 meeting on November 3rd, Council set a framework for strategic planning for the 2009-10 fiscal year. That framework includes three "priority objectives" as the basis for the strategic plan:

1. *Internal organizing for the purpose of creating solidarity within and across bargaining unit boundaries – i.e. a "solidarity project"*

2. *Strategic and coordinated collective bargaining*
3. *A significant external organizing initiative*

The draft framework was prepared by the Society's Policy Committee in conjunction with an "environmental analysis"—a comprehensive examination of the external and internal environment affecting the Society's ability to realize its objectives and protect its interests.

Council representatives attended a three-hour workshop, at which the results of the environmental analysis were presented, and the draft framework explained. The workshop then broke into small groups, where the individual elements were discussed at length, with a great deal of energy.

The representatives present had an astonishing array of ideas for directions the Society might go in all three areas. General agreement was achieved, however, that internal organizing should be the first priority.

The framework, as approved by Council, will form the basis of the Executive Board's drafting of the Society's Strategic Plan. In accordance with the Society's structures



photo: David Smiley

Joe Lesperance (l) and Tracy Miller lead Council reps in a “small group” discussion on organizing: an astonishing array of ideas

and procedures, the Executive Board is now responsible for formulating and approving the Plan by March, 2009.

The Society’s Policy Committee is Chaired by EVP Policy **Leslie Forge**, and has benefited greatly from the participation and contributions of elected representatives of various ranks from a variety of locals. Staff Support is provided by researchers **Matthew Kellway** and **Frank White**.

Council approves Constitution changes, referendum to indemnify

Society Council has ratified a number of changes to the Society Constitution that will have important effects on how Society business is conducted.

The changes were initially approved by Council in October, 2007, subject to ratification by membership referendum. Though the deadline for ballots was extended into February, 2008, the referendum never achieved quorum. In

such cases, the Constitution requires Council to make the final decision.

The changes include:

- ◆ It is now required that all members and elected representatives adhere to Society bylaws and policies, in addition to the Constitution itself; failure to do so can result in charges under the Society’s discipline procedures
- ◆ Quorum for membership referenda is changed to 25 per cent from 33; where a referendum fails to achieve quorum, the count of votes cast will be reported to Council (as part of the process by which Council renders a decision on the subject of the referendum—see above)
- ◆ A Standing Finance Committee is established to “provide advice and support to the EVP Finance (required by the Audit Action Plan – see *Newscasts* 2006:07 through 2007:02, among others)
- ◆ The make-up of the Audit Committee is changed in accordance with the Audit Action Plan (see *News-casts* 2006:07 through 2007:02, among others); Council now has the power to appoint its members
- ◆ Adds to the Constitution Interpretation Committee’s mandate that they will serve as the “screening panel” for charges under the compliance and discipline procedure (Article 24)
- ◆ Members of new Society locals will not pay dues until their first collective agreement is achieved
- ◆ Editorial changes to the Constitution will not be subject to referendum
- ◆ Discipline trial procedures are streamlined and rationalized

Council chose not to exercise its new right to appoint the Audit Committee, as the right did not exist before the meeting was called to order. See below.

Indemnification

Council also endorsed a proposal from the Executive Board that the Constitution incorporate a clause indem-

nifying members of the Society Executive Board from liabilities arising out of the exercise of their duties and responsibilities as union officials.

This change will not come into effect unless it is approved in a membership referendum.

The Society is not a legal “person,” and so cannot be sued as such; instead, persons taking action against the Society do so against its leaders as individuals. Currently, the Society carries insurance that protects those individuals against damages from such actions, but only up to a limited amount.

The change approved by Council would cover the rest, provided the Board member involved was acting legally and reasonably.

Bylaw 9.3 requires that ballots be sent within thirty days of the Council vote, or by December 3rd.

Council approves Minello as VP, makes other appointments

Society Council has approved the appointment of **Dennis Minello**, OPG senior engineer, to the position of Executive Vice President, Member Services.

Minello served in the position as acting Vice President from January to June, when he was appointed to the position permanently at the June meeting of the Executive Board. The Executive Board asked Council to approve that appointment, which they did.

His term runs until March 31st, 2010.

Council also appointed a new Constitutional Interpretation Committee (CIC). The CIC is made up of up to five members, none of whom can be members of the Executive Board, who shall “arbitrate any disagreements arising out of interpretation of the Constitution.” The CIC also serves as the “screening panel” in the compliance and discipline procedure (see Article 24, Society Constitution). Their decisions are final and binding. The following were appointed:

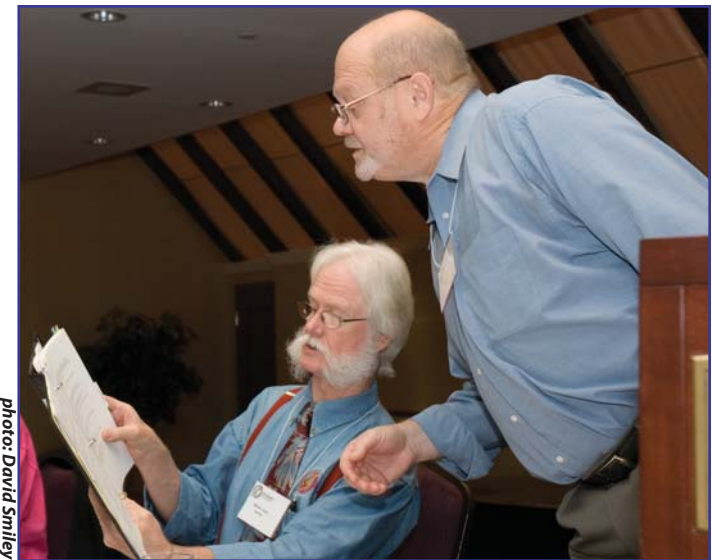


Photo: David Smiley

Society President Rod Sheppard and EVP Finance Bill Jones confer during the Society Council meeting

- ◆ **Ali Aghvami** (OPG)
- ◆ **Leon Collins** (Hydro One)
- ◆ **Darek Kulczynski** (OPG)
- ◆ **Ken Martin** (Bruce Power)
- ◆ **Linnel Torralba** (OPG)

In future Society Council meetings, because the Constitutional changes reported above are now in effect, the Audit Committee will be appointed by Council. As those changes had just been approved, Council authorized the Executive Board to make those appointments.

Long-term nuclear waste personnel spun off to NWMO

About 30 Society-represented employees of OPG are to be transferred to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO).

“It’s a pretty good deal for our members,” said OPG Local VP **Lanny Totton**. “And their new employer has some serious retention strategies—they really want to keep them.”

The transfer is expected to take effect on January 1st, 2009. They will continue to be represented by the Society.

The NWMO is a corporation charged by the federal **Nuclear Fuel Waste Act** (NFWA) with the responsibility for long-term management of the waste from Canada's use of nuclear fuels. It was established by OPG, NB Power, and Hydro Quebec in 2002. (Bruce Power has no responsibility for long-term management of waste.)

In 2007, the federal government adopted the approach to nuclear waste recommended by the NWMO. Since May, 2008, OPG and the NWMO have been organizing the transfer of the resources and activities involving deep geological work to the NWMO. Once that is complete, the NWMO will become the employer of those OPG employees involved in that work.

OPG retains responsibility for the day-to-day management of nuclear waste.

In August, OPG, the NWMO, and the Society completed memoranda of understanding that will effect the transfer while the employees involved retain their rights under the Collective Agreement. The provisions include:

- ◆ All employees transferred will continue to be represented by the Society, and the collective agreement provisions in the OPG collective agreement will continue to apply
- ◆ All NWMO Society-represented positions are guaranteed until at least December 31st, 2010 (termination of the current collective agreement)—there can be no involuntary layoffs
- ◆ OPG and the NWMO will have a reciprocal pension transfer agreement for at least two years from the date the transfer takes effect
- ◆ Employees who are eligible for undiscounted pension (rule of 82, 35 years of continuous service, or 65 years old) on the date of transfer have two months to decide whether to retire; if they do, they will continue in employment with NWMO with no requirement for a probationary period, and with no enrolment in the health, dental, pension, and life

insurance plans, but with a 15 per cent addition to their current pay in lieu of those benefits

- ◆ Any OPG employee who is hired by NWMO within two years of the transfer date can bring their OPG service with them
- ◆ The mediation/arbitration agreement will be extended to 2019.

Totton says he expects the NWMO to do more hiring; eventually the NWMO bargaining unit should be more than 60 Society-represented employees.

The Society team negotiating the agreement was Totton; unit directors **Joseph Fierro**, **Deodatt Somaru**, and **Peter Tien**; and delegate **Jose Freire-Canosa**. Staff Support was provided by **Elizabeth Traicus**.

Winnipeg professionals to affiliate with IFPTE

The Winnipeg Association of Public Service Officers (WAPSO) is about to become the latest union to affiliate with the IFPTE.

"Our environment is becoming much more challenging, and we'll benefit from belonging to a larger organization," said Bob Young, WAPSO's Executive Director. "Affiliation with the IFPTE will help us bargain more strategically and communicate more effectively."

WAPSO represents professional, administrative, and supervisory employees of the City of Winnipeg and Winnipeg's Riverview Health Centre, about 700 in total. WAPSO also expects to be joined soon by a group of managers at the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority—an application for certification is currently before the Manitoba Labour Relations Board.

"I think it's tremendous news," said IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer **Paul Shearon**. "We're moving west and growing."

The IFPTE represents more than 18,000 municipal and county employees in the U.S. "It's a sector in which we

have some expertise,” says Shearon. “It’s good to be able to enter into that area in Canada.”

Joining the IFPTE involves a significant dues increase—\$3.35 bi-weekly. WAPSO leaders noted the money will go towards the many professional services IFPTE brings to the table, including research, communications, and training assistance, plus the IFPTE’s expertise in campaigning, among other things.

Society President **Rod Sheppard** noted that WAPSO is the second member of the Canadian Council of Professionals to join the IFPTE. (The Telecommunications Employees Association of Manitoba affiliated in 2006.) “We co-founded the CCP just to keep in touch with professionals across Canada,” he said. “But like ourselves, they’re seeing the need to be engaged in the broader labour movement.”

While the decision to affiliate has been made—WAPSO’s membership approved the expenditures and dues increase involved at a general membership meeting on November 5th—Young says affiliation details have yet to be worked out. “I expect we’ll be talking to [IFPTE leaders] soon, and sorting out the details.” Shearon agreed, saying he

thought an agreement would be reached by “mid-January.”

Stanford: stoke the real economy!

Unions can help the economy recover from the U.S. housing-bubble meltdown by advocating measures that will help the “real” economy, says one of Canada’s leading economists.

“Our members in the workplace are very concerned about where the world is going and unions have to have something to say about that,” says Jim Stanford.

*The banking system dumped trillions of dollars into wildly speculative bets, far beyond what the housing industry needed. They weren’t worried about the future—they were lending to anyone. Now they are worried about the future, and many banks will lend to no one... The whole debt chain has come unhinged. Once that starts to happen, the **real** economy comes to a halt.*

It’s the “real economy,” says Stanford, where most of us work and make a living, and working people need to make sure it starts up again, the sooner the better.

Stanford spoke to Society Council on November 3rd. He is a senior researcher for the Canadian Autoworkers (CAW), and a regular columnist for the *Globe and Mail*.

He’s the author of 1999’s *Paper Boom*, an insightful look at the way what he calls the “Paper Economy” has taken prominence in advanced capitalist economies, at the expense of what he calls the “real” economy. That’s the one where investments are made to provide the tools and infrastructure for the making of things and rendering of services that help its participants to meet their human needs: food, shelter, entertainment, etc. that working people consume in the business of living their lives, raising their families, and arranging their affairs.

Around 85 *per cent* of the populations in developed capitalist countries make their livings from the real economy,



Photo: David Smiley

The CAW’s Jim Stanford

and 10-15 per cent (and shrinking) in self-employment and farms, all of them entirely dependent on the real economy humming along, working well. While the paper economy has a real role to play—providing the investment that is at the root of productive processes—financial speculation for its own sake will inevitably get in the way of the real economy.

The seeds for [the current] crisis were set in the private, de-regulated financial system, in the paper economy. It is an inherent, predictable, regular outcome of a de-regulated, profit-driven financial economy. The fact is we give bankers too much leeway to do stuff that is really unproductive, and we forget what the real mission is – real investment into real production in the real economy.

The next few years will be “really rough,” he says, as we’re “clearly headed for a world-wide recession.” In addressing the needs of the real economy, Stanford says unions should push for:

- ◆ re-regulation of the financial industry—not to do so just invites more speculative “bubbles”
- ◆ socialization of credit creation—we don’t need to leave it to private financiers to create credit; public institutions are just as able to do the job, and will be more likely to do it in the public interest
- ◆ measures to address the real slowdown—while it’s important to stabilize the banking industry, it’s more important to make sure the real economy keeps going
- ◆ measures to protect key industries and firms—manufacturing is in deep trouble, and the coming recession could push them “right over the edge”
- ◆ measures to protect our pensions—all this will have a huge effect on fund valuations, and the pressure to reduce benefits and increase contributions will be tremendous
- ◆ In future, make the real economy the priority for investment
- ◆ fight against workers bearing the costs

“The 1930s were a terrible decade,” he said, “but unions responded creatively and knowledgeably, and they came out of the ‘30s stronger than they went in. We can do the same, but it depends on our courage, and our fighting spirit.”

Stanford holds a PhD from New York’s New School of Social Research, and is also the author of *Economics for Everyone*, available from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Demographic survey launched

The Society’s 2008 demographic survey is currently underway.

“We’re asking members to identify some crucial information about themselves so the Society can represent them better,” said EVP Member Services **Dennis Minello**. “The survey is an important part of strategic planning—we need members’ help.”

The survey is web-based—conducted using the Society’s web-site. “I can’t stress enough how easy it is to fill out the survey,” said EVP Policy **Leslie Forge**. “It’s a great innovation, a great use for our web-site.”

Society staff and Biz-zone Internet Group have been working on a module for the Society’s web-site that can be used for surveys, including bargaining surveys, and, in future, elections. The 2008 demographic survey is its first test.

“By participating in the survey,” said Forge, “members are preparing the ground for a new way to make decisions in the Society.”

Members can fill out the survey by logging on to their web-site account, and going to “my Society.”

IFPTE hires new organizer

Omar Latif is the new Canadian Organizer for the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers.



The IFPTE's Omar Latif

Omar comes to the IFPTE from UNITE HERE, where he worked as a union representative for more than ten years. In that position, he led negotiations, handled grievances, prepared cases for arbitration, trained members, and participated in organizing campaigns, among his many other duties. UNITE HERE represents 50,000 workers in Canada and 450,000 across North America in a variety of industries.

Born in Karachi, Pakistan, Omar attained his first Master's Degree before emigrating to Canada, in 1977. He received a second Master's Degree—in political economy—as well as a Bachelor's in education and an Ontario teaching certificate, all from the University of Toronto.

He's had a life of many experiences, working as a sales clerk, library assistant, teacher, counsellor, and university lecturer, and has always been involved in progressive causes and movements. In Toronto, he's been active in the student movement, the Metro Network for Social Justice, the Committee of Progressive Pakistani-Canadians, the Committee for Racial Equality, and the anti-war movement. In the 1990s he volunteered his time as a facilitator for the Equal Opportunity Office of the Board of

Education. He and his wife met at a 1979 demonstration against the Shah of Iran.

Omar's a stalwart union man, putting much personal effort into the unions in his workplaces.

He lives in Toronto with wife Simin and daughter Maya.

He joins IFPTE organizers Bill Fitzpatrick and Anna Liu, and they work out of the Society office.

IEA: Nuclear capacity must grow 80 per cent by 2030

(re-printed from World Nuclear News)

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has published the latest edition of its World Energy Outlook (WEO). The report states that nuclear capacity must grow to least 1.8 times current capacity by 2030 if global temperature rises are to be kept to 2°C.

Nobou Tanaka, IEA Executive Director, said that "current trends in energy supply and consumption are unsustainable—environmentally, economically and socially" and called for the medium- and longer-term target of secure sustainable energy for all not to be ignored. The current economic climate has, however, affected both investment and policy priorities.

On the current trajectory, the WEO predicts that world temperatures will rise by 6°C. The report explores two alternative scenarios: the '550 policy scenario', where carbon dioxide (CO₂) will be stabilized at 550 parts per million (ppm) and temperatures will rise by 3°C; and the '450 policy' scenario, with CO₂ stabilising at 450 ppm and temperatures rising by 2°C.

"Limiting temperature rise to 2°C will require significant emission reductions in all regions and technological breakthroughs," according to the IEA. Both scenarios assume that at the meeting of the parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), planned in Copenhagen next year, agreement is reached

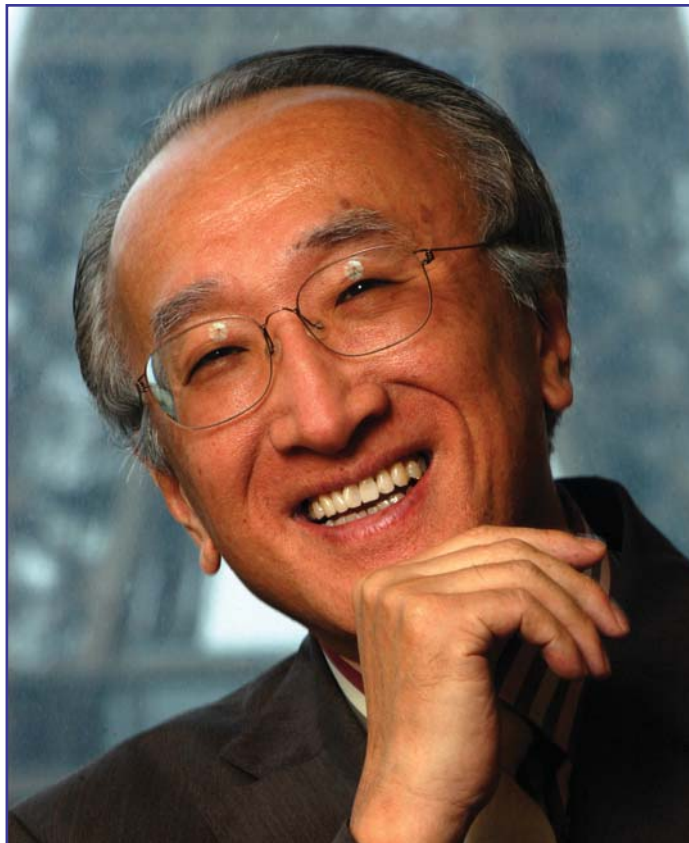


photo: IEA

International Energy Agency Executive Director Nobou Tanaka

on global cap and trade policies and that these policies are properly implemented.

Tanaka and Fatih Birol, lead author of the WEO, have stated that, although power generation is only part of the problem, the “energy sector is central to stabilising emissions.” At a press conference to launch the latest edition, Birol said, “Two thirds of the reduction must come from the power generation sector.” To achieve this, Tanaka said, “40 per cent of global generation must be derived from low carbon sources.”

“The biggest challenge is to get the developing countries on board,” said Birol. He added, “OECD countries’ roles in energy demand are becoming less and less important—

their contribution in net terms to growth of fossil fuel consumption will be negligible.”

Tanaka emphasized that “the low price energy age is over.” Global energy demand will grow, and just to offset oil field decline another 400 million barrels per day would need to be brought on line. The price of oil is expected to increase and will average \$ 100 per barrel up to 2030, when the price will increase further. Oil will increasingly come from OPEC countries and national companies.

The WEO suggests that \$23 trillion dollars of investment is needed to arrive at the ‘450 policy scenario’, 52 per cent of which should be in the power generation sector. Retiring generation will need to be replaced and new generation brought online to keep up with demand. The credit squeeze could delay investment and cause supply crunch when the world economy begins to stabilize.

“We cannot let the financial and economic crisis delay the policy action that is urgently needed to ensure secure energy supplies and to curtail rising emissions of greenhouse gases. We must usher in a global energy revolution by improving energy efficiency and increasing the deployment of low-carbon energy,” said Tanaka.

Poll shows growing UK public support for nuclear

(re-printed from World Nuclear News)

The UK public is increasingly concerned about energy supplies and support for nuclear energy is growing as a means of both meeting future demand and reducing emissions, according to a poll commissioned by EDF Energy.

The online poll on energy policy was conducted by YouGov between October 30th and November 3rd. There were 4449 respondents to the survey.

When asked about their level of interest in certain issues, 85 per cent of respondents said they were ‘very or fairly interested’ in where the UK’s future electricity will come



Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Plant, Wales, UK

from, compared with 82 per cent in a similar poll conducted in 2007. Also, 69 per cent of respondents said they were interested in the issue of nuclear energy. Seventy-eight per cent thought that energy was the biggest challenge facing the UK and its government, up from 60 per cent in 2007.

Forty-three per cent of people questioned said that their opinions or impressions of the current use of nuclear energy were either 'very or mainly favourable,' while 29 per cent said they were 'very or mainly unfavourable.' More respondents considered nuclear power plants favourably than they did coal or gas fired plants (24 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively), but wind farms were seen as most favourable (76 per cent).

The majority of respondents (61 per cent) were aware that most of the UK's older nuclear power plants and some coal power plants will shut down by 2020, resulting in a substantial gap in energy supplies. Just over half of those questioned (53 per cent) support the construction of new

nuclear reactors to replace the ones closing down in order to help fill this gap. Twenty-seven per cent said they opposed this.

Some 62 per cent said that they agreed with the statement 'Nuclear energy has disadvantages but the country needs it as part of the energy balance, with coal, gas and wind power,' while 13 per cent disagreed. Additionally, 63 per cent agreed that 'the best solution is to replace nuclear power stations with new ones and expand renewables like wind power at the same time,' with just 15 per cent disagreeing.

Nearly half of respondents (47 per cent) think that planning regulations to construct new nuclear power plants on the sites of old ones should be eased. This compares with 43 per cent in 2007. Some 42 per cent of people said that nuclear power plants spoil the landscape, compared with 48 per cent for coal power plants and 47 per cent for wind turbines. However, just 24 per cent said that gas power plants are an eyesore.

Concerns about the safety of nuclear energy have fallen slightly, with 76 per cent of respondents saying there is an issue of safety with nuclear power plants, down from 79 per cent in 2007.

Vincent de Rivaz, Chief Executive of EDF Energy, said: "This latest poll shows increasing support for nuclear power to be part of the solution to meet the looming energy gap in the UK."

He added, "The survey shows that the public has a strong understanding of the nature and scale of the energy challenge facing the UK. People are keenly aware of the need for action to be taken to keep the lights on, address climate change, and maintain affordable prices. To help meet this challenge, we've set out our plans for four new nuclear plants in the UK, with the first one operational by the end of 2017."

Society Newscast 2008:04

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