



CANADIAN  
NUCLEAR  
WORKERS' COUNCIL

**SUBMISSION TO THE**

**CANADIAN NUCLEAR SAFETY COMMISSION**

**IN REGARDS TO**

**CANADIAN NUCLEAR LABORATORIES (CNL) APPLICATION  
FOR AN EXTENSION AND AMENDMENT TO THE  
OPERATING LICENSE FOR CHALK RIVER LABORATORIES  
SITE**

March 7, 2016

## **Members of the Commission:**

The Canadian Nuclear Workers Council (CNWC) is an organization that is comprised of Unions that represent workers in Canada's Nuclear Industry. Appendix 1 attached is a list of the Unions that are our members.

The CNWC has reviewed the pertinent documents submitted by the licensee (CNL) and also the CNSC Staff Report. We are in full support of the CNSC's Staff recommendations to extend the Operating License for 17 months.

We will address the following issues:

- Worker Safety
- Labour Relations
- Emergency Management & Fire Protection
- Public perception

## **WORKER SAFETY**

Our member unions have a strong track record of proactively identifying and working to eliminate and control any potential threats to human health and safety and to the environment.

The health and safety of workers at CNL Chalk River Laboratories is covered by Federal Legislation and through collective bargaining agreements.

The leadership of the on-site unions continues to work with management to maintain a strong safety culture and the effectiveness of the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) at CRL. The JHSC, which meets once per month, comprises 23 members representing the on-site unions and eight members from CNL management. The unions also have a representative on the CNL Company wide Health & Safety Policy Committee.

Under Health and Safety legislation workers have the right to refuse work assignments they consider to be hazardous. Such worker safety refusals occur from time to time and have normally been resolved in an expeditious manner.

If there were any health and safety matters of a potential threat to CRL workers and their families or to the public living in nearby communities that were not being addressed expeditiously, we would hear about it. No such matter has been raised during the current licensing period.

The CNWC supports the CNSC Staff's assessment that CNL continues to implement an effective radiation protection program.

The CNWC also supports the CNSC Staff's assessment that CNL's implementation of conventional health & safety at the site has met and continues to meet all applicable regulatory requirements.

## **LABOUR RELATIONS**

Labour Relations are never perfect but it is important to have the means to resolve disputes in a timely manner. At CRL the unions all have grievance procedures in their collective agreements which provide a means to resolve disputes. Once the internal process is completed then there is a provision for third party resolution via the mediation/arbitration process. This external process is utilized on a regular basis.

The Union representatives meet with site senior management regularly to discuss issues. By keeping Union Representatives well informed workplace concerns are kept at a minimum.

At this time several of the collective agreements between the onsite unions and CNL have expired and the parties are working their way through the collective bargaining process. This process normally creates some frustrations for the employees and the employer but in recent years agreements have been reached.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & FIRE PROTECTION**

Union members undertake the vast majority of the work in the emergency response and fire protection programs at the site.

The CNWC supports the CNSC Staff's assessment that CNL continues to implement and maintain an effective emergency management & fire protection program at the CRL site.

## **PUBLIC PERCEPTION**

The Unions that belong to the CNWC represent a vast number of member that live in communities around the Chalk River Site and have done so since its existence which is over sixty five years. There are many third generation family workers at this site.

Our member unions and their memberships have a keen interest in ensuring that their families live and play in healthy and safe communities. Additionally, unionized workers also have a strong commitment to the protection of the public and the environment.

A large segment of the community immediately adjacent to CRL comprises CNL employees and their families who in turn are active in various local organizations. These workers are frequently asked questions about the CRL site. They assure the public that the CNL Chalk River Site is a safe place and presents no hazard to the community. If they feel protected as workers, the communities should have no worries that their health and safety is at risk. In the unlikely event of any on site incidents, staff are well trained to respond to any emergency and to take immediate and safe action to reduce any potential impacts.

As the site has been in operation for over 65 years the local residents are comfortable living in the vicinity. CNL's public relations program also keeps the local people assured that the site is safe and also updates them on any events on site.

**The CNWC member unions suggest that a very high majority of the local residents are fully supportive of the site and that most of the opponents to the license renewal will be from distant locations.**

## **CONCLUSION**

The CNWC recognizes that it is only the early days for the new Licensee CNL. We are confident that they will operate the site to the same high standards as the previous Licensee.

At the public hearing on April 5 you will hear the views of some of the union leaders in regards to the above issues and we will welcome any questions that you may have.

The CNWC submits that this facility, CRL, is operated in a safe manner and the facility does not pose any health & safety threats to the workers or the public. Also the proper controls are in place to ensure that there are no threats to the environment. The CNWC and our member unions at CRL are in full support of the 17 month license extension.

Respectfully submitted

David Shier  
President CNWC

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Canadian Nuclear Workers' Council Member Unions**

**International Association of Firefighters  
Local 160**

**International Association of Machinist & Aerospace Workers  
Local 608**

**International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
Local 37**

**Power Workers Union**

**Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPS)  
CRPEG & WRPEG**

**United Steel Workers  
Locals 8914, 7806, 14193, 13713, 8562 ,1568, 4906**

**Society of Energy Professionals**

**Society of Professional Engineers & Associates (Candu Inc)**

**Ontario Building & Construction trades Council**

**Grey Bruce Labour Council**

**Durham Region Labour Council**

**Northumberland Labour Council**

**International Union of Operating Engineers  
Local 776**

**International Union of Professional & Technical Employees Union  
Local 164**

**UNIFOR  
Locals 252- O, 599 –O, 48 – S, 524 - O**