

**DNGS Community Advisory Council**  
**Darlington Nuclear Information Centre**  
**Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2024**  
**Highlights**

**DNGS Relicensing Update**

Craig Axler talked about the expiration of OPG's current operating licence for the Darlington station (which expires on Nov. 30, 2025) and its plan to apply to the CNSC for a new licence with a 30-year term. Council members asked many questions about the extended term.

**Site Update**

Allan Grace talked about the plan to refurbish Pickering Nuclear Units 5 to 8, an historic development at OPG. Allan also updated the CAC on the operating status of the four units at Darlington. In response to a Council question, he explained the decision to opt for refurbishment at Pickering Nuclear.

**Emergency Management Ontario**

Michael Munro talked about Emergency Management Ontario and its role in the province. Michael also talked about the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan (PNERP). He reviewed nuclear emergency response exercises in 2023 as well as exercises coming up in 2024 and 2025.

**Enterprise Emergency Management (EEM)**

Marilena Michienzi talked about OPG Enterprise Emergency Management (EEM) as well as the roles of the province, the municipalities and the utilities in the unlikely event of a nuclear emergency. Marilena talked about OPG's drills and exercises program. She reviewed EEM highlights from 2023 and listed EEM priorities for 2024.

**Community/Public Affairs**

Lindsay Hamilton talked about recent and forthcoming OPG activities in the community. Among the items mentioned: site visits of industry and government officials in January; the educational Bring Back the Salmon program; and the record-breaking success in OPG collecting for the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Food and Toy Drive in 2023.

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**CAC:**

Jim Boate (via Zoom)  
Sami Elhajjeh  
Cara Gregory  
Bethany Matovic  
Mary Novak (via Zoom)  
Jennifer O'Meara  
Stacy Wanamaker  
Bonnie Wrightman

Regrets:

Sheila Hall  
Heather Reid  
Pat Pingle  
Robert Rock  
Penny Smith

**OPG:**

Craig Axler  
Aditi Bhardway  
Lucas Curran  
Richard Geofroy  
Allan Grace  
Lindsay Hamilton  
Jesara Holla  
Parisa Mahdian  
Marilena Michienzi  
Tania Szewczuk

**Emergency Management Ontario:**

Michael Munro

**Hardy Stevenson and Associates:**

Francis Gillis  
Dave Hardy

## **Topic #1: Health and Safety Moment**

Following a Land Acknowledgment, Lindsay Hamilton, Senior Manager Corporate Affairs, presented some tips on winter driving: plan ahead and check road conditions; install winter tires. Lindsay noted that Ontario has a “511 app” for winter road conditions, snow plow tracking and weather warnings.

## **Topic #2: Review of Minutes**

The minutes from the Community Advisory Council meeting of Nov. 28, 2023 were approved without changes.

## **Topic #3: CAC Intervention at CNSC Hearing**

CAC Facilitator Dave Hardy updated members on the CAC intervention at the CNSC public hearing on Jan. 24. The issue was the applicability of the Darlington new nuclear Environmental Assessment and Plant Parameter Envelope to the selected reactor technology (the BWRX-300 Small Modular Reactor (SMR)).

Dave thanked Council members Heather Reid and Robert Rock for presenting the CAC intervention message to the CNSC. He noted that the presentation included a CAC recommendation of reintegrating a section of the waterfront trail (now detoured to an on-road section of Energy Drive) back into Darlington land.

Dave said that the intervention was well received by the CNSC.

## **Topic #4: DNGS Relicensing Update**

Craig Axler, Director Nuclear Regulatory Affairs Program, talked about the expiration of OPG’s current operating licence for the Darlington Nuclear Generating Station (which expires on Nov. 30, 2025) and its plan to apply to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) for a new licence (Appendix 1). The current licence was for 10 years. For the new licence, OPG will be applying for a term of 30 years.

Craig mentioned a number of factors that OPG feels justifies a 30-year licence:

- Because of refurbishment, most of the equipment in the station is essentially brand new.
- In the U.S., licences are generally granted for the life of the utility.

- OPG doesn't expect to just take the licence for granted. OPG would identify actions it would take over those 30 years to ensure compliance with the terms of the licence.
- OPG would continue to address any questions or concerns from the community; the company values its interactions with stakeholder groups in the community.

Richard Geofroy noted that Darlington was the first utility in Canada to get a 10-year licence. This leadership role puts OPG in a good position to ask for a 30-year licence.

Craig also talked about the regulatory process of applying for a licence from the CNSC. He listed a series of milestones for the process, including a public hearing in June 2025, an expected Commission decision in September 2025 and expiration of the current licence in November 2025.

Craig concluded with a description of how interested parties can make an intervention at the public hearing.

Craig, Richard, Jesara Holla, and Lindsay responded to Council questions:

- *I can count 10 years on my fingertips. Thirty years seems like a long time. What if ownership of the Darlington plant changes during that time? What if the plant is bought by a European or South American company?*

Craig: All the same licence obligations would be transferred over to the new owner. If such a purchase were to happen, there would be a licence review and a review of the new owner.

- *I'd like to see that in the language of the licence. Whoever the owner is, if they don't meet the conditions of the licence, the plant gets shut down. What if new technologies come?*

Richard: Any would-be purchaser would need to demonstrate the ability to operate the plant and be able to manage any liabilities.

- *The public needs the language of the licence to be ever so clear, including language around a potential change of ownership.*

Richard: We also have experience in transferring ownership of a plant—the shift of ownership of the plant in Tiverton to Bruce Power. We'll be sure to make a point of addressing the issue of transfer of ownership in the licence.

- *I understand you have a relationship with the Tennessee Valley Authority regarding SMRs.*

Jesara: Yes, we are working very closely with the TVA. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with them regarding SMR development. They are at the outset of an SMR project. Lessons learned during SMR technology selection and construction will be shared both ways.

Craig: Also, OPG has some hydro stations in the U.S. Anyone can offer to buy a station, but any ownership transfer goes through a regulatory process in and of

itself. The regulatory criteria, including secondary impacts, are extensive. We went through such a process with the transfer of ownership to Bruce Power.

Richard: Whether a licence is for 10 years or 30 years, the same conditions apply, and the same risks occur.

Lindsay: The CNSC issues an annual regulatory oversight report. They provide funding for stakeholder involvement.

Craig: Any change in the licence needs CNSC approval.

- *If there is a delay in getting the new licence after the expiration of the old licence, is the interim period covered?*

Craig: Yes, there would be an arrangement of extend the current licence.

- *What if the CNSC is not comfortable with a 30-year term?*

Craig: The CNSC can reduce the licence term.

- *Are other ministries involved in licensing issues?*

Craig: It is prudent to have certain ministries involved, but the CNSC is the sole regulatory authority.

Richard: A plant performance review is part of the licence hearing. That review will influence the licensing decision.

- *The CAC would like to see interim reports during the term of the licence.*

Craig: Any reports the Council would like to see can be requested through Lindsay.

Lindsay: Our communications plan takes those interim reports into account.

Dave noted that the Pickering CAC is going to review performance documents. Both the Darlington and Pickering Councils have indicated a strong interest in such reports.

- *I assume that, as OPG engages with Indigenous and other stakeholders during the term of the licence, that the CAC will be kept informed.*

Craig: Yes, there will be opportunities during the 30 years for public comment and influence. We definitely want to allow the community to speak to the CNSC during the licence term.

Dave recommended an OPG heads-up to the CAC as reports to the CNSC occur.

- *Is information on the licence renewal out there yet?*

Anyone out there who's aware of the upcoming licence application is being kept informed. We'll eventually broaden information to the wider public.

## **Topic #5: New Roles at OPG**

Richard Geofroy introduced Allan Grace as the new Senior Vice President at Darlington Nuclear. Richard is moving to the position of Deputy Chief Nuclear Officer.

Dave thanked Richard for his leadership in engaging the CAC and wished him well in his new role. CAC members applauded Richard.

Allan noted that he is originally from Grey County. He talked about his history at Darlington Nuclear, and said he was looking forward to interacting with the CAC.

## **Topic #6: Site Update**

Allan talked about the planned refurbishment of Pickering B (Units 5 – 8), which he described as the biggest change he has seen in his history at OPG.

Regarding the four units at Pickering A, Units 1 and 4 will be put into a lay-up state by the end of this year. Units 2 and 3 have been in a lay-up state for a number of years.

Following the shutdown of Pickering B by the end of 2026, all four units will be shut down over a period of three to four months. The refurbishment project will then be initiated. This project will require more investment than the Darlington project.

Allan noted that Darlington is now about 65 percent through its refurbishment process. Units 2 and 3, which have completed their refurbishment, are now operating at full power. Units 1 and 4 are currently in refurbishment.

This spring the combination of employees and contract workers will mean the most people ever seen will be working at Darlington. This number of workers is due to the simultaneous refurbishment of two units as well as the SMR project.

Allan responded to Council questions:

- *Why the refurbishment at Pickering?*  
Ten years ago, OPG was planning to shut down the whole plant at Pickering in 2024. A number of developments since that time led to a change of mind on the future of the station: the success of the Darlington refurbishment; an anticipated gap ahead between electricity supply in Ontario and increasing demand; the cost of Pickering refurbishment versus the costs of other options.
- *Will Pickering construct its own reactor mock-up?*  
I'm not sure what the plans are, but if there is to be a mock-up at Pickering, it would be a little different from the one here at Darlington. (Jesara remarked that the experience at Darlington is that a mock-up pays for itself in efficiency dividends.)
- *How have energy workers reacted to the news of Pickering refurbishment?*

The Power Workers Union and the Society of United Professionals are very much on side. Refurbishment will bring an additional 1,000 employees to Pickering, many of them from Clarington and area.

## **Topic #7: Emergency Management Ontario**

Michael Munro, Senior Manager Nuclear Radiological and Scientific Response Programs, talked about Emergency Management Ontario, its role in the province and deliverables planned for 2024.

He noted that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) began a review of all of Canada's nuclear facilities in 2017. The review was finally wrapped up in June 2023 in Ottawa.

Michael then presented an overview of:

- Emergency Management Ontario's public education and framework strategy
- Radiological hazard assessment
- Nuclear Emergency Management Program (NEMP) activities in 2023, including information sharing with nuclear plants in the U.S. The NEMP looked at recovery steps following a shutdown scenario due to an emergency, once a plant is in stable condition.
- The Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan (PNERP) timeline for public consultations

Michael then talked about nuclear emergency response exercises in 2023. Emergency Management Ontario worked with federal government bodies, other provincial ministries, municipalities, and utilities. The exercises demonstrated that the province has a very robust nuclear emergency management program.

He also talked about emergency response exercises coming up in 2024 and 2025. These exercises, including Cobalt Magnet 2025, a full-scale nuclear emergency exercise, demonstrate an international nuclear emergency response and interoperability between federal, provincial, state and municipal jurisdictions.

Michael talked about the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC). He noted that the floor plan is designed so that the Centre can deal with multiple emergencies at the same time.

Michael responded to a Council comment:

- *I'm impressed with the level of detail that you go into in the exercises.*

Yes, we want to demonstrate how nuclear emergency response fits into various organizations and roles to verify and demonstrate that Ontarians are safe, practiced, and prepared.

## **Topic #8: OPG Enterprise Emergency Management (EEM)**

Marilena Michienzi, Section Manager Enterprise Emergency Management, talked about EEM and presented a 2024 program overview for Darlington Nuclear (Appendix 2).

The EEM mandate is to ensure OPG has adequate provisions for the preparedness, and response capability, to mitigate the effects of a nuclear emergency, and protect the health and safety of the public, personnel, and the environment.

Marilena presented the Ontario Nuclear Emergency Framework and the roles of the province, the municipalities and the utilities in the unlikely event of a nuclear emergency. The province has authority for off-site emergency response and makes all public protective action decisions. The province informs the public of an emergency, but that is based on the information provided by the utilities, such as Darlington Nuclear.

Marilena also presented the OPG Emergency Response Organization Structure. In addition to the EEM team, this organization also includes many plant employees who have taken additional education to work with EEM.

Marilena talked about OPG's drills and exercises program, noting that Darlington typically runs five drills per year.

She reviewed EEM highlights from 2023, including Exercise Unified Command, a major event in September 2023 involving all levels of government and emergency response organizations. This was a three-day large-scale exercise simulating a nuclear emergency at the Pickering station.

Marilena also listed EEM priorities for 2024.

## **Topic #9: Community/Public Affairs**

Lindsay Hamilton, Senior Manager Corporate Affairs, talked about recent and forthcoming OPG activities in the community:

- About 100 tours, presentations, media and onsite events took place at Darlington last year. Site visits during January 2024 included: Duke Energy; Durham Region Members; GE-Hitachi engineering team; Canada Growth/Finance tour; Governor of Indiana.

- On Friday, Jan. 26, Darlington Nuclear welcomed students from Vincent Massey Public School as part of OPG’s Bring Back the Salmon Hatchery Launch. This event is part of an educational program that OPG delivers in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA). On May 23, students will gather on the shoreline of Bowmanville Creek to release the salmon fry.
- The third annual Build What you CAN competition was a success. Teams at OPG design and construct structures built with non-perishable food items on display at entrances of buildings across the site. The food collected was donated to Feed the Need in Durham. This year over \$4,000 worth of cans was collected with six teams competing for best build.
- The 35<sup>th</sup> annual Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Food and Toy Drive broke all previous records in 2023. Over \$22,300 was collected along with toys and food.
- OPG and Aecon came together last year to donate a combined \$133,000 to three essential community services during the holiday season.
- The latest issue of Neighbours Newsletter will be delivered to mailboxes in Durham Region within the next week or so.

A Council member noted that the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority is organizing a garbage cleanup project for Earth Day (April 22).

## **Topic #10: Concluding Remarks**

Allan thanked the CAC for their participation this evening. He encouraged members to “ask us the hard questions.”

### **Next Meeting**

Darlington Nuclear Information Centre  
 Tuesday, April 23, 2024  
 4 pm – 7 pm