

**Emily Lutz**

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**From:** Canadian Nuclear Association <communications@cna.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 31 January 2024 7:00 am  
**To:** Jenna Leifso  
**Subject:** the reactor: new life for Canada's nuclear workhorse!

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*Newsletter of the Canadian Nuclear Association*  
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## **A good day for old reactors...**

It may not have been the best kept secret in the nuclear industry, but yesterday Minister of Energy Todd Smith finally announced that the Government of Ontario is [supporting the refurbishment of Pickering Nuclear Generating Station](#). Messages of support and celebration came swiftly from industry, civil society, unions, and local government, showcasing the vital importance of this workhorse of the Ontario electricity grid.

"We are thrilled that Pickering, a workhorse of the Canadian energy system, will be refurbished and given the opportunity to provide us with another 30 years of affordable, sustainable, clean energy," [said John Gorman, President and CEO of the Canadian Nuclear Association](#). "This project ensures that we are maintaining and growing the skills and expertise that we have invested in over the past decade with the refurbishment and major component replacement projects at Darlington and Bruce."

"Today's announcement protects good union jobs, and will help our province produce low-cost, emissions-free power as we electrify our economy into the future," said [Michelle Johnston, President of the Society of United Professionals](#).

The Government estimates that the refurbishment will take 11 years, create about 11,000 jobs per year and increase Ontario's GDP by \$19.4 billion.

“With global business looking to expand in jurisdictions with reliable, affordable and clean electricity, a refurbished Pickering Nuclear Generating Station would help Ontario compete for and land more game-changing investments,” said Minister Smith. “The refurbishment of Pickering would create thousands of new jobs and help produce at least another 30 years of safe, reliable and clean electricity to power the next major international investment, the new homes we are building and industries as they grow and electrify.”

While no budget has yet been released for the project, international data shows that the lifetime extension of existing nuclear facilities is among the cheapest forms of low-carbon power. The Canadian nuclear industry has proven its ability to deliver similar projects on time and on budget, and we look forward to the Pickering refurbishment project being yet another made in Canada success story.

## **New reactors...**

Moving west, yesterday also saw an important announcement in Regina with the signing of an agreement between GE Hitachi and SaskPower to advance SMR development in Saskatchewan. The province has been working toward potential deployment of a GE Hitachi BWRX-300 reactor in the province in the early 2030s.

This new agreement enables collaboration on project planning and sharing of expertise related to the design, fuel sourcing and fabrication for the BWRX-300. It will also support the workforce and supply chain planning needed for a Saskatchewan-based SMR deployment.

“This agreement is another important step in our efforts to support Saskatchewan’s workers, businesses and clean energy goals,” said Lisa McBride, GE Hitachi Canada Country Leader. “The BWRX-300 reimagines what is possible when it comes to generating reliable, carbon-free energy.”

## **And sleeping reactors?**

Finally, the idea of nuclear power generation returning to Quebec continues to simmer, with the news yesterday that Hydro-Québec had found “no major barrier” to restarting Gentilly 2. This CANDU reactor, with a capacity of 675 MW, was shut down in 2012 and decommissioning work has been progressing.

However, as electricity demand is set to grow substantially in a province that has largely tapped out its viable hydro reserves, the idea of bringing Gentilly 2 back online remains tantalizing. The

latest round of speculation is the result of a CBC article that looks into a preliminary evaluation carried out by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of Hydro-Québec.

Hydro-Québec CEO Michael Sabia said [earlier this year](#) that they had decided not to proceed with refurbishment, given “social acceptability” issues. What is becoming clear now is that with a lack of technical barriers, if issues of social license and political support can be overcome, there may yet be a future for nuclear – and Gentilly 2 – in Quebec.

## What we're reading...

- [Orano Canada and Denison to restart McClean Lake mining operations](#)
- [Ukraine to start building 4 new nuclear reactors this year](#)
- [Microsoft Looks to Nuclear to Fuel AI Plans](#)



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