

## Day 2 Pickering NGS Opening Remarks

### CMD 13-H2.61



Good morning/afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. My name is John Roberts, and I'm the President of the Canadian Nuclear Society. With me is Mr. Colin Hunt, Secretary of the Canadian Nuclear Society.

By way of introduction, the Canadian Nuclear Society is the learned society of Canada's nuclear science and technology community. We have over 1,000 members drawn from virtually all areas of Canada's nuclear science and engineering infrastructure. Our purpose is communication to aid the spread of accurate technical information about nuclear science and engineering technology among Canada's nuclear energy professionals and to interested members of the general public. As a volunteer society, we undertake this through a number of programs, including technical conferences, support for public and university education, and a small but effective scholarship program.

The purpose for which we are gathered today is the prospective renewal of the operating licences of the Pickering A and B nuclear power stations, and the combining of those licences into one operating licence.

I do not propose today to critique specific aspects of the technical safety performance of the Pickering A and B NGS. Ontario Power Generation has submitted its application along with the technical information to support it, and the CNSC staff has provided its response.

Instead, my purpose here today is to highlight the importance of Pickering NGS and the renewal of its operating licences. The safety decisions made by the CNSC should be made in the context of their importance and significance to the welfare of Canadians, to the economy of Canada and Ontario.

It should be clearly understood that all human activity contains some element of risk. An activity as simple as turning on a stove to boil water in a kettle contains some risk of injury. We tolerate these risks for two reasons:

1. That the risk is relatively low in absolute terms.
2. That the activity undertaken provides benefits.

This principle applies to the operating of the Pickering NGS as well. Our submission to you outlines in some detail the benefits provided by the operating of Pickering NGS, benefits which citizens in Ontario began to enjoy 42 years ago. And to this day, the absolute risk of operating the reactors has remained acceptably low, while the benefits have remained disproportionately large.

There are those who suggest that Ontario has alternatives to the use of nuclear power. Such a claim is false. Ontario, unlike British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec, has no large, undeveloped hydraulic resources. Ontario, unlike Alberta and Saskatchewan, has no significant reserves of fossil fuels. In fact, since the early 1950s, Ontario has had only two significant sources of new electricity generation: imported fossil fuels, or nuclear power. These facts are just as true today as they were in the 1950s; geographic facts do not change except over geologic time.

The provision of reliable, economic electricity in large quantities has been and continues to be an essential component of Ontario's economic life. It is safe and clean kilowatt-hours, produced at competitive costs and to a despatchable schedule, which power Ontario's households. Reliable electricity constitutes a large part of Ontario's industrial strength.

So it is the view of our Society that the decisions made by the CNSC are not purely abstract questions of safety. These decisions made by you have direct economic and physical consequences for the lives of millions of people. Our Society accepts that the absolute risk of the operation of Pickering is acceptably low, and that the benefits provided by it are extremely high.

I look forward to any questions you may have regarding our written submission or my statements here today.