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WNA POSITION STATEMENT ON SAFE MANAGEMENT OF NUCLEAR WASTE AND USED NUCLEAR FUEL
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This WNA Position Statement summarizes the worldwide nuclear industry's record, progress and plans in safely managing nuclear waste and used nuclear fuel. The global industry's safe waste management practices cover the entire nuclear fuel-cycle, from the mining of uranium to the long-term disposal of end products from nuclear power reactors.

The Statement's aim is to provide, in clear and accurate terms, the nuclear industry's "story" on a crucially important subject often clouded by misinformation.

Inevitably, each country and each company employs a management strategy appropriate to a specific national and technical context. This Position Statement reflects a confident industry consensus that a common dedication to sound practices throughout the nuclear industry worldwide is continuing to enhance an already robust global record of safe management of nuclear waste and used nuclear fuel.

This text focuses solely on modern civil programmes of nuclear-electricity generation. It does not deal with the substantial quantities of waste from military or early civil nuclear programmes. These wastes fall into the category of "legacy activities" and are generally accepted as a responsibility of national governments.

The clean-up of wastes resulting from "legacy activities" should not be confused with the limited volume of end products that are routinely produced and safely managed by today's nuclear energy industry.

On the significant subject of "Decommissioning of Nuclear Facilities", which is integral to modern civil nuclear power programmes, the WNA will offer a separate Position Statement covering the industry's safe management of nuclear waste in this context.

The safe management of nuclear waste and used nuclear fuel is a widespread, well-demonstrated reality. This strong safety record reflects a high degree of nuclear industry expertise and of industry responsibility toward the well-being of current and future generations. Accumulating experience and knowledge will only reinforce this already robust safety record.

The current generation of humankind must not abdicate its duty to employ available, affordable and scientifically reliable means to meet its responsibility for disposing safely of nuclear waste and used nuclear fuel. Continued development of deep geological repositories and their operation beginning in this decade is essential if this responsibility is to be met.

The nuclear industry has demonstrated that it accepts the management responsibility for nuclear waste and used nuclear fuel as a fundamental duty and is prepared to fulfil its obligation with professional dedication and technological skill.

This WNA Position Statement is the subject of this paper.