



Canadian Nuclear  
Safety Commission

Commission canadienne  
de sûreté nucléaire

# The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

## An Overview



Canada 



Nuclear safety is everyone's business. Every day, millions of Canadians use nuclear energy, though we may not always be aware of how it contributes to our lives.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) regulates the use of nuclear energy and materials to protect health, safety, security and the environment and to respect Canada's international commitments on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Created in 1946 as the Atomic Energy Control Board, the agency changed its name in 2000 with the enactment of the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* (NSCA). Its vision is to be one of the best nuclear regulators in the world by being effective, efficient, transparent and an employer of choice.

## **CNSC Mission**

To regulate the use of nuclear energy and materials to protect health, safety, security and the environment and to respect Canada's international commitments on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The CNSC is an independent federal government agency, and is comprised of two components: a Commission tribunal and a staff organization. The Commission tribunal has the responsibility 1) to establish regulatory policies on matters relating to health, safety, security and the environment, 2) make legally binding regulations, and 3) make decisions based on laws and regulations. The staff organization has technical experts in various disciplines of nuclear safety and control. Both components report to the President and Chief Executive Officer and are accountable to the Parliament of Canada through the Minister of Natural Resources Canada.



The CNSC has both national and international nuclear safety responsibilities. Within Canada, we regulate over 2000 licensees in activity areas such as mines, health clinics, nuclear generating stations, and waste management facilities. We work to ensure their safe operation for workers, the public, and the environment. Security is also a CNSC priority, and a rigorous security program is enforced.

## **CNSC Mandate**

Under legislation enacted by Parliament, and policies, directives and international commitments of the federal government, we:

- regulate the development, production and use of nuclear energy in Canada;
- regulate the production, possession, use and transport of nuclear substances, and the production, possession and use of prescribed equipment and prescribed information;
- implement measures respecting international control of the development, production, transport and use of nuclear energy and nuclear substances, including measures respecting the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices; and
- disseminate scientific, technical and regulatory information concerning the activities of the CNSC, and the effects on the environment, on the health and safety of persons, of the development, production, possession, transport and use of nuclear substances.

The CNSC is also responsible for working to ensure, through a licensing process, that Canada's nuclear exports are used only for peaceful purposes. The CNSC controls nuclear material in Canada in



fulfillment of Canada's international obligations not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Canada was the first country with substantial nuclear capability to reject nuclear weapons. Since then, Canada has been actively involved in international activities and the promotion of safe and secure uses of nuclear materials and technology.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is committed to involving Canadians in the regulatory process. The Commission holds public hearings and meetings throughout the year to establish regulatory policy and to consider applications for licences to major facilities.

This decision-making administrative tribunal advises the public of upcoming proceedings at least 60 days before a hearing. The notice of public hearing is posted on the CNSC Web site and is publicized in the area surrounding the facility that will be the subject of the hearing. Hearings are open to the public. Members of the public, companies or groups who have an interest in the matters being heard can make oral or written presentations to the Commission.

When making their decision, the members of the Commission tribunal take into consideration all relevant submissions from CNSC staff, the applicant, and the intervening public. The decision is sent to participants, published on the Web site and communicated to the media.

Information on how to participate in any licensing matter is available on our Web site at [www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca).



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