

State of California  
Seismic Safety Commission

Memo

To: Richard J. McCarthy, Executive Director  
Commissioners

From: Seismic Safety Commission  
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Date: November 10, 2010

Subject: Update on Seismic Hazard Assessment for Nuclear Power Plants in  
California

**Background:**

In 2006 AB 1632 (Blakeslee) required the California Energy Commission (CEC) to produce a report looking at the impact of an earthquake or plant aging on large baseload power plants in California and the potential impacts to the electric system reliability, public safety and the economy. The baseload minimum capacity of 1,700 MWs excluded all but two operating power plants in California. The power plants to be studied were the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant (DCNPP) and the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS).

CSSC staff and representatives from other state agencies assisted the CEC and its contractor in developing the report entitled: An Assessment of California's Nuclear Power Plants: AB 1632 Report. The report was released in the fall of 2008 by the CEC.

New information regarding the seismic hazard potential has been developed by the USGS and Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the owner operator of the DCNPP since the 2008 report was issued. The owners of DCNPP and SONGS had requested that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approve their requests for funding of studies to update and assess the seismic hazard potential at their facilities. Both owners were proceeding with their activities for relicensing of the power plants before the March 11, 2011 Tohoku-oki earthquake and tsunami which damaged a number of nuclear power stations in Japan.

Staff will update the CSSC regarding its activities as a part of the Independent Peer Review Panel (IPRP) for seismic hazards for the DCNPP and the status of the proposed contract between the CSSC and the CPUC. The CPUC has not yet approached the CSSC about participating on an IPRP for the SONGS.

**Recommendation:**

This is an informational item. Commissioners are encouraged to ask questions.