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Taiwan Units Maintain Strong Performance In 2003

Taiwan's three nuclear power plants generated a total of 37.4 terawatt hours (TWh) of electricity in 2003 – just short of the 38 TWh record achieved in 2002.

The total of four boiling water reactor (BWR) units and two pressurised water reactor (PWR) units operated by Taipower have a total installed capacity of 5144 megawatts (MW). Their generating total in 2003 accounted for 21.5% of Taipower's gross generation.

The Atomic Energy Council (AEC) in Taipei told NucNet that the units' performance has been improving steadily. The average capacity factor for all six units has increased from 75% to 85% over the past decade – reaching a high of 88% in 2002 and dipping to an average overall capacity factor of 86.3% last year.

The annual average number of abnormal events per unit has fallen from more than 20 to below five – and the AEC said the average number of automatic scrams per unit per year has fallen from over two to "well below one". In 2003 there were only two scrams among all six units (a record to date) – caused by a typhoon [see News No. 268, 12th September 2003].

Four units reached continuous operation periods of more than 340 days last year. Unit one of the Maanshan plant achieved 475.6 days of continuous operation, before starting a scheduled refuelling outage, which the AEC said was the first whole-cycle (18 months) run record of all of Taipower's units, and "a record high among Asian countries to date".

The AEC said that, at an average cost of around two US cents per kilowatt hour, the cost of nuclear-generated electricity was "lower than any other power resources in Taiwan". The AEC added: "All these indicators show performance of nuclear power in Taiwan is steadily improving and regulatory efforts are also recognised."

Meanwhile, the construction of Taiwan's fourth nuclear power plant at Lungmen continues. The site's two advanced boiling water reactor (ABWR) units were 53% complete at the end of 2003. Lungmen-1 is scheduled to enter commercial operation in 2006, although the AEC said plans for Lungmen-2 to enter commercial operation in 2007 "may possibly be delayed".

Source: AEC / Taipower

Editor: John Shepherd