

tract and deliver energy more efficiently. Specifically, ARPA-E aims to invest in key advances in magnetics, semiconductor switches, and charge storage, which could reduce power conversion costs by up to 50% for utilities and 80% for homeowners. Up to \$10 million will be made available for this program area.

The five technology areas announced in April will join ARPA-E's seven ex-

isting programs in power electronics (ADEPT), battery technologies (BEEST), building cooling (BEETIT), non-photosynthetic biofuels (Electrofuels), grid energy storage (GRIDS), carbon capture (IMPACCT), and its initial open solicitation.

In its first year, ARPA-E awarded \$363 million in Recovery Act funding to 121 groundbreaking energy projects

based in 30 states, with approximately 39% of projects led by universities, 33% by small businesses, 20% by large businesses, 5% by national laboratories, and 3% by non-profits.

More information about ARPA-E, current funding opportunities, and previously announced awards can be accessed at <http://arpa-e.energy.gov/>.

Nuclear Safety Convention Meeting commits to learn lessons from Fukushima nuclear accident

The 5th Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was held in Vienna, Austria, and concluded on April 14, 2011.

During the 10 days of meetings, delegations from 61 of the 72 countries that are "contracting parties" to the Convention discussed long-term safety issues, as well as the unfolding nuclear emergency at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant in Japan.

In a statement adopted at the meeting, the contracting parties said, "The Contracting Parties affirm their solidarity with the Japanese people and continue to offer support to the Japanese in their efforts to respond to the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant.

"The international community recognizes the significance of the Fukushima nuclear accident, which highlights the need to consider new challenges and

underlines the paramount importance of safety in the use of nuclear energy."

As a result of the Fukushima accident, the contracting parties are carrying out safety reviews of their nuclear installations, including reexamining the nuclear power plants' safety measures that defend against extreme external events.

The Review Meeting's conclusions included detailed technical discussions about enhancing safety culture; overcoming challenges in recruiting a new generation of nuclear professionals; managing ageing nuclear facilities and safely extending their lifetimes; nuclear power plant designs; siting of new plants; periodic safety reviews; countries new to nuclear power; international cooperation; as well as networking on emergency management and operating experience.

In addition, the conference attendees discussed country reports on nuclear safety that every contracting party is obliged to submit. All countries with op-

erating nuclear power plants are among the CNS' contracting parties.

The contracting parties stated that the learning process following the Fukushima accident will continue as more information is acquired and analyzed.

They also welcomed IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano's initiative to convene a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety on June 20–24, 2011, and pledged their support.

Although the CNS is scheduled to meet every three years, it was agreed that they would convene a meeting next year to analyze the Fukushima accident.

CNS, which entered into force on October 24, 1996, was designed to enhance nuclear safety. Its objectives are to achieve and maintain a high level of nuclear safety worldwide, to establish and maintain effective defenses in nuclear installations against potential radiological hazards, and to prevent accidents having radiological consequences.

Sasha Henriques, IAEA Division of Public Information



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