

Paris, 14 April 2004

NEA/COM(2004)3

NEW REPORT REVIEWS THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE FIELD OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

The OECD Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) just released a report that addresses the roles and responsibilities of government in the field of nuclear energy. It provides data and analyses on how these have evolved and identifies future challenges for governments, particularly with respect to the development of competition in electricity markets. The report suggests some considerations that all governments could take into account regardless of their policies towards nuclear power.

Privatisation and competition in the nuclear sector mean that many decisions are no longer directly made by governments. However, there will always be strategic reasons for government intervention – national security; emergencies; national projects of such importance or urgency that only government can do the job. By and large, the current sentiment in most OECD countries is that the government should intervene only when it is in the best position to carry out the task and when the benefits of intervention outweigh the costs. In fact, the role of governments in nuclear energy varies considerably between countries, according to their specific history and situation.

This report benefited from the expertise of nuclear energy policy makers from the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency's member countries.

GOVERNMENT AND NUCLEAR ENERGY

OECD, Paris 2004 – ISBN 92-64-01538-8 – € 21, £ 15, US\$ 26, ¥ 2700

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JT00162140