



Change is in the air

With this first issue of *NEA News* for 2006, we welcome in a fresh new look to accompany our new enlarged-distribution policy. In the past, complimentary distribution was reserved to NEA committee delegates. From now on, and in line with recent trends towards enhanced information exchange with civil society, this distribution has been extended to all interested parties upon request; *NEA News* is now also available in full on the NEA website at www.nea.fr.

But new developments are clearly not restricted to distribution matters as readers will discover in the pages that follow. Three important international peer reviews have recently been completed under NEA auspices: one on the *Safety of Geological Disposal of High-level and Long-lived Radioactive Waste in France*; another on *French R&D on the Partitioning and Transmutation of Long-lived Radionuclides*; and a first-of-its-kind review in the nuclear safety and regulation area concerning the report issued by the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council on the lessons learnt from the Vandellós II event that took place in August 2004. The first two peer reviews and their main findings are described in the article on page 7. More in-depth coverage of the challenges and potential benefits of partitioning and transmutation (P&T), based on the study just published by the NEA entitled *Advanced Nuclear Fuel Cycles and Radioactive Waste Management*, is provided on page 21.

Important news covering both “the old and the new” is about to be released in a new publication entitled *Forty Years of Uranium Resources, Production and Demand in Perspective* (or “The Red Book Retrospective”), which provides the most complete record of the uranium industry publicly available, from the birth of civilian nuclear energy through to current times. Readers are provided with an overview of this unique publication on page 4.



And more generally speaking, the nuclear energy field continues to evolve, with even greater momentum having built up over the past year or so, and the NEA programme of work, projects and activities following suit. Of particular influence have been activities associated with the Generation IV International Forum (GIF), new initiatives under consideration such as the Multinational Design Approval Program (MDAP) and the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP), and the prospect of a significant increase in the world's nuclear generating capacity in the years and decades to come. We will be sure to continue keeping our readers informed of important developments as they arise.

At the OECD level, after ten years at the helm of the Organisation, Secretary-General Donald Johnston has now passed the commands to Mr. Angel Gurría. The NEA would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Johnston for his considerable support of the Agency's work during his tenure, and to wish him every success for the future. The NEA is also very happy to welcome Mr. Gurría as the new Secretary-General of the OECD and looks forward to working under his leadership in these times of renewed interest in nuclear energy.

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