

Brussels, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014

## **Doel 3 and Tihange 2 still temporally shut down until further notice**

**End of June 2014, the two Belgian reactors of Tihange 2 and Doel 3 are still maintained shut down by the licensee Electrabel.**

As a reminder, in March 2014, following unexpected results of one of the medium term actions requested for fully demonstrating the structural integrity of the reactor pressure vessel, the licensee has decided to anticipate the planned outages of Doel 3 and Tihange 2 as a precautionary measure. The involved mid-term action was to conduct experimental research on the impact of irradiation on material properties of sample pieces with hydrogen flakes. The results of these tests indicate that a mechanical property (fracture toughness) of the material is more strongly influenced by irradiation than experts had expected. Additional testing and research are necessary to interpret and assess these unexpected results.

Up to now, no definitive conclusions can be reached from the analysis of the results of the first irradiated material toughness test.

A second accelerated irradiation program was started by the licensee using the BR2 reactor at the Mol Nuclear Research Centre in order to refine the assessment program.

On June 12th, the licensee Electrabel announced that the mechanical tests and metallurgical assessments of the irradiated samples from this second irradiation program will run at least until autumn 2014.

FANC, Bel V and AIB Vinçotte will continue to follow up on this dossier and will take the time that is necessary to examine closely all available research results. Where needed, the FANC will consult an international group of experts to review the licensee's new safety case.