

## Time to capitalize on CANDU's potential

After reading Tom Adams' dismal portrayal of AECL and CANDU, I felt compelled to respond to your readers with a different perspective. Having come from the U.S. nuclear industry, I am new to Canada and new to AECL as its Chief Technology Officer. I joined after a great deal of careful investigation of the company I was being asked to join.

Although I was well aware of the international reputation for safety, performance and reliability CANDU has earned, I knew less about AECL itself, other than a reputation for its critical mass of technical talent and leadership.

Contrary to Mr. Adams' assertions, upon closer inspection I found that AECL is a public policy success story of which all Canadians can be proud. Since being incorporated in 1952, AECL has received almost \$8 billion in funding from the Government of Canada. This in turn has generated more than \$160 billion in GDP benefit from the production of electricity, leading edge Research & Development, international sales of CANDU plants, uranium mining and refining, medical radioisotopes and a wide range of professional services.

But I didn't join AECL for its history – I joined because of AECL's tremendous potential to take its expertise and capitalize on the burgeoning world-wide market for nuclear power.

CANDU is an international success story that competes head-to-head with the best in the world. International rankings of reactor performance consistently place CANDU as the best performing technology.

AECL also has the best project management record for on time, on budget delivery, and Canada's supply chain has the best and deepest capacity of any jurisdiction. That's due in part to the fact that AECL and its Team CANDU partners are the only nuclear vendors in the world who have been building reactors almost continuously for the past 30 years. That has kept the best and brightest technical and project people here in Canada, helping confirm that we have a truly viable domestic nuclear industry.

The potential rewards are great for Canada. According to a recent Conference Board of Canada study, the construction of twin ACR-1000 units in Ontario would result in \$5.15 billion in GDP creation and create 62,000 person-years of employment. Each new export of a CANDU to another nation could generate up to \$1 billion of GDP impact, depending on Canadian content. The Study also outlined a scenario whereby AECL with four domestic projects and eight projects outside of Canada, would generate up to \$55 billion in real GDP along with almost 500,000 person-years of employment.

The window of opportunity is here. More than 200 reactors are planned to be built in the next 20 years and Canada is already in discussion with potential customers like China, Argentina, India, Jordan, Romania and other Eastern European countries who see the advantages of CANDU for their country.

A distinguished panel of experts appointed by the China National Nuclear Corporation concluded that CANDU is the ideal reactor design to further China's nuclear power program using thorium as an alternative to uranium as a nuclear fuel source. The panel also noted the ability of CANDU reactors to reuse uranium recycled from light water reactor fuel from

our competitor's reactors and unanimously recommended that China consider building two new CANDU units to take advantage of CANDU's unique capabilities in utilizing alternative fuels. These are solid competitive advantages for Canada in one of the fastest growing economies on the planet.

My close look at AECL and the potential for CANDU made a tough decision to uproot and embark on a new career in Canada a lot easier. I'm glad I did, and I'm ready to help capitalize on our superior technology, our talented people and the growing demand for nuclear power around the world.

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