



Expert Panel Calls for a New Research Reactor

Ottawa, ON – June 30, 2010 – A panel of experts addressing a gathering of scientists as part of the American Conference on Neutron Scattering in Ottawa this week has called for a new research reactor. The panelists represented the research functions of the NRU reactor: materials research using neutron beams and nuclear energy development.

Bruce Gaulin, President of the Neutron Scattering Society of America and Professor of physics at McMaster University said, “Canada should renew its infrastructure and our need for neutron beams is a major justifier for a new source, independent of other possible uses.”

The knowledge generated from neutron-beams alone contributes to the competitiveness of many traditional Canadian industries such as aerospace, automotive, power generation, oil and gas, metal-forming, and manufacturing, while providing a foundation for emerging industries such as health sciences, information and communication technologies, environmental stewardship, and nanotechnology.

“The Province is still committed to a research reactor as laid out in the Expression of Interest to Natural Resources Canada’s call for solutions to the medical isotope crisis,” said Dean Chapman, representing the proposed Canadian Neutron Source to be located at the University of Saskatchewan. Such a reactor’s main purpose would be to produce neutron beams for research.

Other panelists spoke of the importance of a new research reactor for nuclear energy.

"A national investment is needed to replace the NRU reactor at Chalk River," said Denise Carpenter, President of the Canadian Nuclear Association. "Research and education is at the heart of Canada's science and innovation agenda. Investments in R&D infrastructure for projects such as a new research reactor will ensure Canada's material science and nuclear technology expertise is maintained at a world-class level," added Ms. Carpenter.

The panel recognized that decisions about the functions of the facility and its location should be reached in consultation with all possible stake-holders. Thus, it called on industry, the science community and governments to work together to develop an engineering and business case that determines how Canada can best to accommodate the strategic needs of Canadian industry, academia and healthcare for the next 50 years. A statement based on the consensus of the panel prepared by the Canadian Institute of Neutron Scattering (CINS) is available online (www.cins.ca).

“On behalf of the communities represented here today, I wish to thank the National Research Council (NRC) for creating this opportunity for a national discussion and acting as its neutral facilitator,” said Dominic Ryan, CINS President. The panel was co-organized by CINS and NRC.

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