

COMMUNICATION FROM THE NMEu SECURITY OF SUPPLY WORKING

Subject: EXTENDED OPAL (AUSTRALIA) REACTOR OUTAGE

Brussels, 20 November 2020

The Security of Supply Working Group (SoS WG) was informed on 19 November by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) that last week, during scheduled maintenance, ANSTO observed an anomaly in a pipe connection that enters the OPAL research reactor's riser structure. There continues to be no impact to people or radiological consequences as a result of the issue.

As a result, the planned OPAL maintenance shut-down, which had been scheduled to end on 13 November, has been extended to allow for additional tests, inspections and analysis. These examinations will take around two weeks and will help determine when OPAL will restart. Consequently, it will be at least four weeks minimum in total (to mid-December 2020) before full nuclear medicine supply is available from ANSTO Health.

ANSTO continues to communicate with the international nuclear medicine community, with respect to timelines for rectification, and distribution of nuclear medicine (including Mo-99) around the world, and apologises for any inconvenience this will cause.

Other Mo-99 producers and research reactors reported to SoS WG that they continue to operate as planned. The NMEu Emergency Response Team is not being convened at this time.

(signed)

Ira Goldman
Chairman NMEU SoS WG

Bernard Ponsard
Vice Chairman NMEU SoS WG

