

## Media Backgrounder

In 1983, the Point Lepreau Generating Station became the first CANDU 6 unit to be licensed for operation. It will soon become the first CANDU 6 to undergo a full refurbishment.

After more than two years of preparation and planning, NB Power and Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. are now weeks away from the beginning of the 18-month outage of the Point Lepreau Generating Station for its refurbishment.

During the refurbishment outage, all of the generating station's 380 fuel channels and associated feeders will be removed and replaced. In order to complete the project, over 50 highly automated systems for fuel channel and calandria tube replacement were designed and developed. Many of these tools are first-of-a-kind while others are based on tools used for new reactor construction.

To meet the highly complex refurbishment schedule and the technical requirements of this project, AECL turned to suppliers from the automotive sector to help in the development of the necessary tools.

These new automated systems will increase productivity and safety during the refurbishment. The degree of automation and the high reliability of performance for these tools will set new global standards in the refurbishment process. These tools can also be re-used at other CANDU reactors around the world.

In August 2007, AECL announced the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Re-Tubing that now employs 145 people. The expertise and new tools pioneered at this centre will be exported around the world for use at other re-tubing projects.

During the refurbishment outage at the Point Lepreau Generating Station, other maintenance work will take place, including upgrades to the reactor's safety system equipment and the installation of new shutdown system trip computers. New waste storage structures will also be constructed.

The refurbishment outage is scheduled for April 2008 to September 2009. It will cost \$1.4 billion, including replacement energy. The refurbishment is expected to extend the life of the Point Lepreau Generating Station by 25-30 years. Point Lepreau employs 675 people and generates 30 per cent of the province's energy.