In-Vessel Melt Retention Severe Accident Management Strategy for Existing and Future NPPs

From 2015-06-01 to 2019-11-30, ongoing project | IVMR Website

Project details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total cost:</th>
<th>Topic(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>EUR 8 205 085</td>
<td>NFRP-01-2014 - Improved safety design and operation of fission reactors</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU contribution:</td>
<td>Funding scheme:</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUR 4 831 454</td>
<td>RIA - Research and Innovation action</td>
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<td>Coordinated in:</td>
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<td>France</td>
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Objective

The stabilization of molten corium is recognised as essential if a safe and stable state is to be reached following a severe accident. Among the possible options, In-Vessel Melt Retention (IVMR) appears as an attractive solution that would minimize the risks of containment failure (less Hydrogen produced, no corium-concrete interaction), if it can be proved to be feasible. The strategy is already adopted for the VVER 440 type 213 based on thorough research work for the Finnish Loviisa NPP and Hungarian Paks NPP. It is also included in the design of some new Gen.III reactors like AP-1000, APR 1400 and Chinese CPR-1000. It has also been studied in the past for other reactor concepts like KERENA (BWR) or VVER-640.

Current approaches for reactors with relatively small power, such as VVER 440 or AP600, use conservative assumptions. However, for higher power reactors (around 1000 MWe), it is necessary to evaluate the IVMR strategy with best-estimate methods in order to address the uncertainties associated with the involved phenomena. Additional R&D is needed to ensure and demonstrate adequate safety margins, including identification of efficient technical solutions for the external cooling of the vessel and performing best-estimate evaluation of relevant scenarios. Among other provisions, the possibility of cooling the corium inside the vessel by direct injection of water into the degraded core, may be considered because it is likely to remove a significant part of the residual power.

The goal of the project is an analysis of the applicability and technical feasibility of the IVMR strategy to high power reactors, both for existing ones (e.g. VVER 1000 type 320 units) as well as for future reactors of different types (PWR or BWR). The main outcomes of the project will be relevant assumptions and scenarios to estimate the maximum heat load on the vessel wall, improved numerical tools for the analysis of IVMR issues and a harmonized methodology on the IVMR.

Related information

Report Summaries

Periodic Reporting for period 2 - IVMR (In-Vessel Melt Retention Severe Accident Management Strategy for Existing and Future NPPs)
Coordinator

INSTITUT DE RADIOPROTECTION ET DE SURETE NUCLEAIRE
AV DE LA DIVISION LECLERC 31
92260 FONTENAY AUX ROSES
France
EU contribution: EUR 803 180

See on map
Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

Participants

UJV REZ, a. s.
HLAVNI 130, REZ
250 68 HUSINEC
Czechia
EU contribution: EUR 644 085

See on map
Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Contact the organisation

JRC -JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE- EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 BRUSSELS
Belgium
EU contribution: EUR 321 726

See on map
Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

COMMISSARIAT A L ENERGIE ATOMIQUE ET AUX ENERGIES ALTERNATIVES
RUE LEBLANC 25
75015 PARIS 15
France
EU contribution: EUR 550 120

See on map
Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

KUNGLIGA TEKNISKA HOEGSKOLAN
BRINELLVAGEN 8
100 44 STOCKHOLM
Sweden
EU contribution: EUR 1 077 576

See on map
Activity type: Higher or Secondary Education Establishments
Contact the organisation
KARLSRUHER INSTITUT FUER TECHNOLOGIE
KAISERSTRASSE 12
76131 KARLSRUHE
Germany
EU contribution: EUR 319 375
See on map
Activity type: Higher or Secondary Education Establishments
Contact the organisation

AREVA NP SAS
1 PLACE JEAN MILLIER TOUR AREVA
92400 COURBEVOIE
France
EU contribution: EUR 82 500
See on map
Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Contact the organisation

ELECTRICITE DE FRANCE
AVENUE DE WAGRAM 22
75008 PARIS 08
France
EU contribution: EUR 111 719
See on map
Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Contact the organisation

GESELLSCHAFT FUR ANLAGEN UND REAKTORSICHERHEIT (GRS) gGmbH
SCHWERTNERGASSE 1
50667 KOLN
Germany
EU contribution: EUR 0
See on map
Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

HELMHOLTZ-ZENTRUM DRESDEN-ROSSENDORF EV
BAUTZNER LANDSTRASSE 400
01328 DRESDEN
Germany
EU contribution: EUR 96 000
See on map
Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation
Fortum Power and Heat Oy
Keilanimentie 1
00048 Espoo
Finland
See on map

**Activity type:** Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)

Contact the organisation

Teknologian tutkimuskeskus VTT Oy
VUORIMIEHENTIE 3
02150 Espoo
Finland
See on map

**Activity type:** Research Organisations

Contact the organisation

MAGYAR TUDOMANYOS AKADEMIA ENERGIATUDOMANYI KUTAKOZPONT
KONKOLY THEGE MIKLOS UT 29-33
1121 Budapest
Hungary
See on map

**Activity type:** Research Organisations

Contact the organisation

NUBIKI Nuclear Safety Research Institute Ltd.
KONKOLY THEGE MIKLOS UTCA 29 33 6 EP
1121 BUDAPEST
Hungary
See on map

**Activity type:** Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)

Contact the organisation

INZINIERSKA VYPOCTOVA SPOLOCNOST TRNAVA S.R.O.
JANA HOLLEHO 5
917 01 TRNAVA
Slovakia
See on map

**Activity type:** Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)

Contact the organisation
AGENZIA NAZIONALE PER LE NUOVE TECNOLOGIE, L'ENERGIA E LO SVILUPPO ECONOMICO SOSTENIBILE
LUNGOTEVERE GRANDE AMMIRAGLIO THAON DI REVEL 76
00196 ROMA
Italy
See on map

**Activity type:** Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 108 750

LIETUVOS ENERGETIKOS INSTITUTAS
Breslaujos g. 3
LT-44403 KAUNAS
Lithuania
See on map

**Activity type:** Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 28 500

TRACTEBEL ENGINEERING
BOULEVARD SIMON BOLIVAR 34 - 36
1000 BRUXELLES
Belgium
See on map

**Activity type:** Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 7 500

IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE
SOUTH KENSINGTON CAMPUS EXHIBITION ROAD
SW7 2AZ LONDON
United Kingdom
See on map

**Activity type:** Higher or Secondary Education Establishments
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 125 905

NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY GROUP
WESTERDUINWEG 3
1755 LE PETTEN
Netherlands
See on map

**Activity type:** Other
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 69 300
INSTITUTE OF NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND NUCLEAR ENERGY - BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
Tzarigradsko Shose 72
1784 SOFIA
Bulgaria
See on map

Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 40 800

CENTRUM VYZKUMU REZ SRO
HLAVNI 130
250 68 HUSINEC-REZ
Czechia
See on map

Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 80 000

NARODOWE CENTRUM BADAN JADROWYCH
ULICA ANDRZEJA SOLTANA 7
05 400 OTWOCK
Poland
See on map

Activity type: Research Organisations
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 48 000

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