



**Written submission from the
Conseil économique du
Nouveau-Brunswick**

**Mémoire du
Conseil économique du
Nouveau-Brunswick**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de la

**New Brunswick Power Corporation,
Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station**

**Société d'Énergie du Nouveau-Brunswick,
centrale nucléaire de Point Lepreau**

Application for the renewal of NB Power's
licence for the Point Lepreau Nuclear
Generating Station

Demande de renouvellement du permis
d'Énergie NB pour la centrale nucléaire de
Point Lepreau

**Commission Public Hearing
Part 2**

**Audience publique de la Commission
Partie 2**

May 11 and 12, 2022

11 et 12 mai 2022



Conseil économique
du Nouveau-Brunswick inc.

March 25, 2022

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
Commission Secretariat/Registrar
280 Slater Street, P.O. Box 1046
Ottawa, ON
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interventions@cnsccns.gc.ca

Subject: Application by New Brunswick Power for Renewal of the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station Power Reactor Operating License

Commission Secretariat/Registrar

Please accept this letter as my written submission as you consider New Brunswick Power's application for the renewal of the operating license for the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station. I am pleased to provide my full support for this application.

My name is Gaëtan Thomas. I am the President and CEO of the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick Inc. (CÉNB). CÉNB is a group of entrepreneurs and businesspeople committed to the economic development of New Brunswick and the Francophone business community. I am also the Vice Chairman of the Atlantic Cancer Research Institute Board of Directors, and a Strategic Advisor with the legal firm McCarthy Tétrault. I was born and raised in the small community of Tilley Road, New Brunswick and then moved to various locations in the province of New Brunswick, where my wife and I have raised our four daughters. You could say I am a New Brunswicker through and through.

In 2020, I retired from a 38-year career with New Brunswick Power, which culminated with me serving as President & CEO for 10 years. I spent many years working in the Nuclear Division as the Chief Nuclear Officer and Vice President Nuclear, where I had oversight of the Point Lepreau plant including during the successful refurbishment project which extended its operating life by 30 years.

Point Lepreau has operated safely and reliably for nearly 40 years and is a pillar of the New Brunswick energy landscape. During my career, I travelled the world visiting other nuclear stations, in particular during my time as Chairman of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO - Atlanta Centre) where I also was also a board member of the world governing board of WANO. I can attest that Point Lepreau is among the top performing plants in the world. In fact, the station received an Excellence Award from the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations in 2019, which recognizes the highest level of safety and reliability in the operation of a commercial nuclear power plant.

The fundamental reason for the plant's award-winning performance is, and always has been, the people of Point Lepreau. The team includes hundreds of highly qualified professionals who dedicate themselves to operating the plant to the highest levels of nuclear excellence. I witnessed first-hand their unwavering commitment to protecting the safety of their co-workers, the public and the surrounding environment. Point Lepreau has become a world leader because of the employees, and it was my privilege to work alongside such a dedicated group of professionals throughout my career.

The Point Lepreau plant is important to New Brunswick and all of Canada. It provides non-emitting, reliable energy for the province at a competitive cost. In my current role at CÉNB, I am hearing more and more about the importance of energy security and cost competitiveness to businesses across the province, especially as we move into the post-Covid recovery period.

There is no doubt the energy from Point Lepreau will continue to be important to securing a strong, energy-secure future for the province while helping to moderate cost. And given nuclear energy contributes no emissions that cause greenhouse gases, Point Lepreau will continue to be critical to Canada's energy mix as we work towards achieving a net-zero carbon future. The importance of nuclear energy in Canada's efforts to combat climate change is critical today and will continue to be in the future. Thanks to the successful refurbishment of Point Lepreau, the plant can generate safe, clean, reliable and cost competitive baseload electricity for decades to come.

I support New Brunswick Power's request for a 25-year license. Over the years, I observed a move within the international nuclear industry to adopting longer operating licenses, for example in the USA. Specific to Point Lepreau, a 25-year license will align well with the post-refurbishment operating life of the plant. And as Canada pursues additional nuclear generation using advanced technologies like small modular reactors, a longer license duration may align well with the enhanced safety features of these technologies as well.

I understand during Part 1 of the hearing, a concern was raised that members of the public may think a longer license duration will mean decreased communication and fewer opportunities to ask questions about plant operations. I have witnessed the Point Lepreau team's commitment to open and transparent communications and to delivering a comprehensive outreach and engagement program. The team understands and values the importance of their social license with the public. It was always a privilege for me to meet with community members, to see the respectful and often-times co-operative relationship between plant staff and members of the public. I do not foresee a longer license duration would have any impact on Point Lepreau's commitment to earning and maintaining their social license each and every day.

In closing, I feel the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station and its employees continue to be an important part of the fabric of New Brunswick, living and working in communities around the plant, and generating safe, clean, cost effective and reliable electricity to support the entire province.

I have great respect and confidence in the nuclear regulatory process in Canada, with which I became very familiar during my time working with NB Power. Through my involvement with the international nuclear industry, I learned Canada has a robust regulatory framework providing strong, independent oversight, which many other countries look to as a model to emulate.

Therefore, I have full confidence the Commission will always make sound, scientific-based decisions with the safety of Canadians as their ultimate priority. I know it is this same creed that guides the actions and decisions of the Point Lepreau team everyday, which is why I am proud to support this application and a 25-year operating license for Point Lepreau.

Regards,



Gaëtan Thomas
President & CEO Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick (CÉNB)