



HOW BERKELEY
NUCLEAR
POWER STATION
WILL BE CLOSED
DOWN.

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY GENERATING BOARD

Power stations – like any other machine, from a family car to a washing machine – eventually start to wear out with time and use.

At some point, a difficult decision has to be taken: Is it worthwhile to continue to spend money to keep them going?

Nuclear power stations are no different.

The CEGB has decided to retire Berkeley in Gloucestershire, one of its oldest nuclear power stations. It shared with Bradwell (in Essex) the distinction of being one of Britain's first commercial nuclear power stations.

When it started operating in 1962, it symbolised the UK's world-beating technological achievement of the time.

Six more power stations based on the Magnox technology were ordered for England and Wales, during that decade, plus one in Scotland. The CEGB was so satisfied with the performance of its Magnox reactors that it gave them the title of 'reliable workhorses' because of their overall high levels of output. Berkeley has generated about 39,000,000,000 units of electricity in just over a quarter of a century.

But now after a thorough review of Berkeley's long-term operating prospects – the nuclear equivalent of an MoT – the CEGB has decided that the time, money and technological effort needed to keep it running is not justified for the electricity it would produce in return for all the work.

Reactor 1 will therefore be retired when it reaches its scheduled 'pit-stop' for maintenance in October. Reactor 2 will stop in the spring when it too is due for its next 'service', having helped to meet next winter's peak demand for electricity.

However, the CEGB's other Magnox stations are expected to have years of service ahead of them. So long as they continue to produce electricity economically and safely, it will be business as usual at these sites.



MAINTAINING STANDARDS

When nuclear power stations reach the end of the road, the decommissioning process takes time, and must be carried out with great care and expertise. Decommissioning is the formal term used when stations cease to generate electricity and are dismantled.

Berkeley's shut-down will involve three stages: During stage 1 the fuel is removed, and with it the greater part – 99 per cent – of the radioactive content of the reactors, which are then sealed off.

At stage 2, the buildings around the reactors are demolished. Stages 1 and 2 will take between 10 and 12 years.

Stage 3 could be deferred for decades to gain the safety and economic benefits of allowing any remaining radioactivity in the reactors to decay naturally. Then the reactors will be dismantled and removed.

At all stages, operations will be monitored to ensure no risk to the public or workforce.

Wastes will be disposed of safely in a properly controlled and officially approved way.

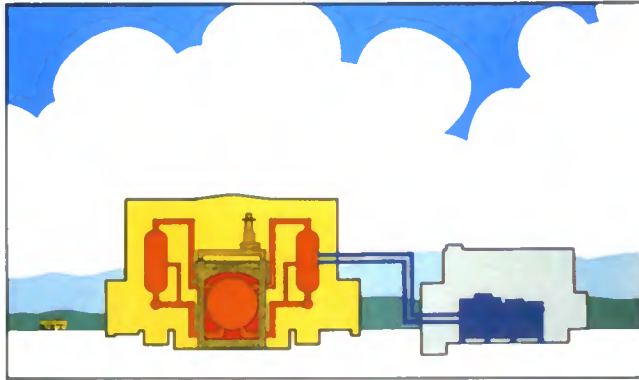
To reinforce rigorous safety standards, the independent watchdog, the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will oversee every stage of the process at Berkeley – just as the NII and other official bodies monitor any nuclear station when it is being built and operating.

This careful concern will also be reflected in our efforts to protect the environment.

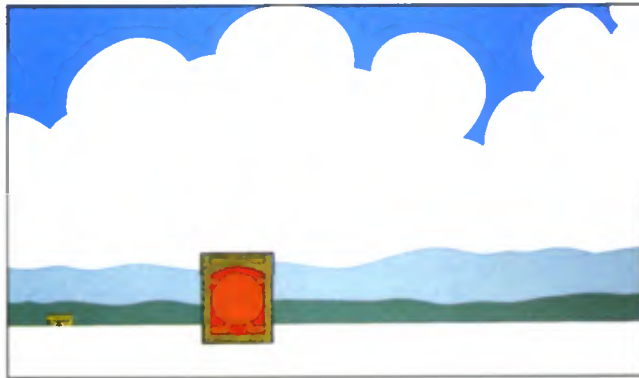
DECOMMISSIONING EXPERIENCE

The CEGB's experts have been involved in research work on dismantling nuclear reactors for about 10 years. The UK Atomic Energy Authority, with whom the CEGB works closely, is currently decommissioning a prototype reactor at Windscale.

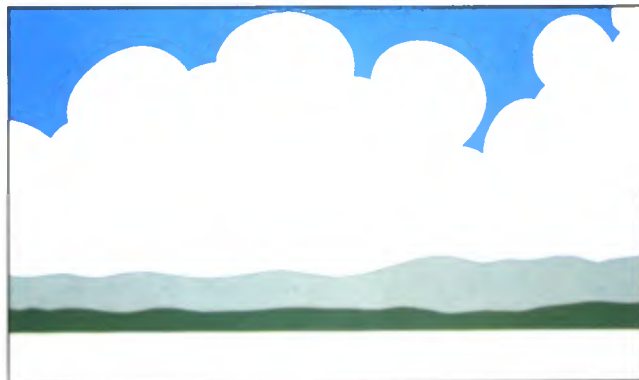
The CEGB is also involved with the EEC's programme of research and development and has access to international experience culled from the closure of 80 reactors throughout the world.



Stage 1



Stage 2



Stage 3

WHO PAYS?

Sums are set aside in each year's accounts to cover the cost of decommissioning each of the CEGB's nuclear power stations. This provision takes into account latest cost estimates revised for inflation.

At current prices, this is likely to total around £300m for Berkeley.

STAFF

Berkeley employs around 530 staff. About half the present number of workers will be needed on site for many years to come. Others will be offered jobs at other CEGB plants. Everyone will get individual counselling and if appropriate, retraining.

There will be no immediate redundancies.

The economic impact on the local community is expected to be gradual.

The CEGB's nuclear laboratories at Berkeley are not affected and will continue.

INFORMATION

The CEGB aims to keep the general public – and especially the local communities around its nuclear power stations – fully informed of its plans at all times. The Local Community Liaison Council, which is an important forum for the free-flow of information around all CEGB nuclear sites, will continue for the first few years after the reactors at Berkeley are shut down.

In addition, the CEGB has a team of specialist speakers who on request will visit local groups, clubs, schools and societies.

If you would like to see Berkeley for yourself, contact Brian Gornall, the Technical Support Officer, who will be happy to arrange a visit to the power station. Write to him at Berkeley Power Station, Berkeley, Gloucester, GL13 9PA.

For further information, for publications on all aspects of the CEGB and its activities or for details of the videos on free loan on a range of topics, contact the PR Manager, CEGB, Bedminster Down, Bridgwater Road, Bristol, BS13 8AN.

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Joined CEGB at BNL on 3 January 1972, Retired 7 May 2007

Continued part-time under Post-Retirement contracts until 30 June 2012

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