



Democratic Progressive Party legislators Chen Ou-po, Yeh Yi-jin and Huang Wei-che hold a press conference in Taipei yesterday, alleging that the Atomic Energy Council purchased a forged report on pressure measurements at nuclear power plants in Taiwan.

Photo: Chien Jung-fong, Taipei Times

The credibility of state-owned Taiwan Power Co (Taipower, 台電) took another hit after allegations of an allegedly fraudulent stress test report and a corruption probe involving a transformer procurement deal, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lawmakers said yesterday.

Citing media reports and remarks from Green Consumers Foundation chairman Jay Fang (方), DPP Legislator Chen Ou-po (陳歐坡) told a press conference that Taipower “has been lying all the way about its performance and nuclear safety.”

Fang and the media reports accused Taipower of hiring uncertified panelists to conduct a “peer review” stress test for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) on the three active nuclear power plants in Taiwan in March.

The six Europeans who conducted the tests were not authorized by the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) to conduct such a review and France-based Atomic Energy Council (AEC) representative Loa Wei-whua (羅偉華) was ineligible for the panel because he is Taiwanese, Fang said, citing ENSREG regulations.

“Since the money for the peer review came from AEC’s donations to the OECD, Taipower effectively spent government money to ‘purchase’ the report, which gave positive comments on Taiwan’s nuclear safety,” Chen said.

Chen also blasted Taipower's white paper for the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant in Gongliao District (公寮), New Taipei City (新北市), which rejected environmentalists' description of the plant as a "self-assembled vehicle" and said Taiwan would be subject to electricity rationing as early as 2015, which contradicts an estimate by Premier Jiang Yi-huah (江宜華), who said the rationing could begin in 2017.

DPP Legislator Huang Wei-cher (黃偉哲) said Taipower's "game-fixing" tactic has again tarnished the company's image after various reports of corruption, with the latest coming from the company's Taiwan Power Research Institute in New Taipei City's Shulin District (樹林), where more than a dozen staffers are being investigated for allegedly receiving benefits from a transformer procurement deal.

In response, the AEC at a separate setting yesterday said that the AEC member on the peer review specialist list did not take part in the actual technical review.

The council's Department of Nuclear Regulation director Chen Yi-pin (陳宜賓) said that due to the nation's ambiguous international status, a request for the International Atomic Energy Agency to establish a peer review team to conduct a stress test last year was rejected by the agency.

However, both the NEA and the ENSREG had agreed to form an independent peer review team for the task, he said, adding that the test report finished in March was by the NEA team and the ENSREG review is scheduled to take place in September.

Chen Yi-pin added that Loa was marked as an "AEC liaison" in the report and was only in charge of administrative and communication work.

Chen Yi-pin said the report was written according to the required standard of the ENSREG's stress test and the NEA's independent peer review team was formed by experts according to the three fields suggested by the ENSREG's stress test standards.

Taipower's stress test fraudulent: DPP

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He added that the ENSREG's review team will consist of nine members and is scheduled to visit the Ma-anshan Nuclear Power Plant in Pingtung County's Ma-anshan (馬鞍山) and the yet-to-be-completed Fourth Nuclear Power Plant.

He said the ENSREG asked Greenpeace to suggest five organizations for civic participation, adding that the five that would be invited are the Taiwan Environmental Protection Union, the Green Citizens' Action Alliance, the Nuclear-Free Homeland Alliance, the Green Consumers Foundation and anti-nuclear writer Liu Li-erh (劉麗英).

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