Ready supply

CANDU’s nuclear suppliers underpin refurbishment and life extension project work through the supply of high-quality parts, tools and talent. And, just like the utilities they work with, this community is using collaboration to strengthen their expertise in nuclear safety and to achieve excellence.

Sometimes, it is a hotel conference room. Other times, it may be a room off a warehouse of the host’s facilities. Either way, when the CANDU Owners Group Supplier Participants converge, the talk is singular in purpose: improve the way things are done.

In the world of big projects, it is the client who generally wears the victory flag or accepts defeat for the team, at least to the outside world. But, in the machinery of any big project, especially those on a nuclear scale, a healthy and well-trained supply community is integral to staying on time and on budget with a quality product.

A challenge to this work is the extended period between major projects, especially of the unprecedented size of the concurrent Darlington refurbishment and Bruce Power life extension projects. The type of work and manufacturing required is not only huge in scale but unique. There is a need for parts, tools and people that take advantage of the latest technology advancements and means greenfield investment, new hiring, new practices and a lot of scaling up for even the most seasoned suppliers. There is a strong need for knowledge management capacity to align a large workforce to the values of nuclear safety and the principles of working on a nuclear-grade project.

The COG Supplier Participant program has been running for several years but with the move into execution phase at Darlington and the preparatory work now underway for the Bruce Power major component replacement project, it has gone into high gear. Regular meetings rotating through the Greater Toronto Area draw participants from the programs 20+ membership as well as executives from the utilities. The result is an opportunity to share perspectives from both sides of the projects and to connect cross-functionally with other suppliers who are working side-by-side either at the workface or whose products and activities interface with each other.

“The same value gained through collaboration by utilities applies equally for suppliers in terms of OPEX and learning from each other,” says Macit Cobanoglu. “And, this forum brings utility executives to the table, as well. So the conversation is not just amongst suppliers but connects all stakeholders on topics that are top of mind in that moment. It is a powerful way to resolve issues and develop competencies with a small investment of time.”

Leaders gain shared vision with New Refurbishment Forum

A COG-facilitated forum led by Bruce Power’s Jeff Phelps and OPG’s Bill Owen allows industry leaders an opportunity to share approaches, technical information, best practices and OPEX on refurbishment while getting a line of site on future deliverables.