COG's SMR program is contributing to Canadian and international collaboration, advancing SMR technology and strengthening industry alignment on deployment — a reality that’s getting closer with a Canadian government and industry commitment

On June 29, OPG became the first utility in North America to take an ownership stake in an SMR project, a major Canadian milestone. Above, an illustration of Global First Power's proposed Micro Modular Reactor project, a joint venture for which OPG is joint owner.

Canada pioneered the use of nuclear energy more than 70 years ago and today its federal government, some of its provinces and industry are poised to lead the world in the technology’s most transformative new — small modular reactors (SMRs). SMRs offer new design features that can provide flexible energy solutions to support the transition to cleaner energy systems, in Canada and around the world, unlocking new export opportunities for technology, safe and smaller-released radioactive materials, to purchase. CANUDI Owners Group (COG), its members, supply community and other industry partners continue to make inroads in advancing solutions and significantly help Canadian companies to international markets. The last few years has seen significant progress towards that goal, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most recently, on June 29, Ontario Power Generation announced it had become the first utility in North America to take an ownership stake in a small modular reactor (SMR) project, the first true full-scale to fruition.

Through COG's Nuclear Safety and Environmental Affairs (NSEA) line of business, COG has taken a leadership role in facilitating information exchange and development on SMR activities. COG is working with the Canadian Nuclear Association on the Canadian Nuclear Industry SMR Secretariat to track progress on the pan-Canadian SMR Roadmap, published in 2018. Canada's SMR Roadmap made over 50 recommendations, including that the federal government and partners finalize an SMR Action Plan, now out for input.

In February 2020, Minister O'Regan announced plans to respond with a launch this fall, stating "Together with our partners across the country, we will launch Canada's SMR Action Plan — outlining the progress and ongoing efforts across Canada to turn our Roadmap into reality."

"As COG members come to agreement on selection of an owner-operator and potential SMR vendors, COG has an active role to play."

"COG brings its strong Canadian and international relationships to the SMR work. With our Canadian and international members and partners, COG can facilitate a framework for a global SMR fleet model," she says. "We are seeing gradual progress towards this objective thanks to our experience bringing global nuclear industry stakeholders together."

"As SMR activities continue to expand, and COG members fulfill their visions, Alderson will oversee the project and the role of the federal government can play on the road to SMR deployment.

Meanwhile, the COG SMR Working Group has focused on commissioning and completing an SMR market study and supporting the interprovincial MoU on SMRs between Ontario, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan.

The COG SMR Technology Forum (SMRTF) and its SMR Vendor Participant Program (SMR VPP).

The SMRTF, which launched in April 2017, consists of all the Canadian nuclear operators as well as key industry organizations leading in the areas of nuclear innovation and SMR development. The Forum promotes harmonized approaches to support safe and sustainable SMR development. As a group, vendors contribute to common technical positions, engage with industry on shared challenges, and participate in the development of solutions. The SMRTF currently has 10 participating organizations.

The COG Vendor Participant Program

"The COG SMR VPP, which was established last year, brings together members of the Forum review or who are connected with a COG member on SMR development. As a group, vendors contribute to common technical positions, engage with industry on shared challenges, and participate in the development of solutions. The SMRTF currently has 10 participating organizations.

Through COG, a CEO SMR Forum was developed, comprised of industry executives focusing on development of a common industry framework and building a SMR case for support from the federal government. The Forum recently put forward an ask to the Canadian Government for economic stimulus. The Forum asked for funding to ensure the opportunity for Canada, and the role the federal government can play on the road to SMR deployment.

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Read the full announcement here.

Natalie Alderson named COG program manager for SMRs

Natalie Alderson, COG's Nuclear Safety & Environmental Affairs Program Manager supports COG’s SMR program and the Radioactive Waste Leadership Forum (RMLF). Alderson joined COG in 2018 as a project manager, with expertise in both safety and regulatory matters. In her position, she has taken on leadership roles and responsibilities in multiple areas.

Beyond Canada’s borders, COG is playing a role in international collaboration. In June, COG Deputy CEO Rachna Clavero, served as a panelist for the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation’s (IFNEC) webinar on global SMR licensing challenges.

COG’s SMR program is working with international nuclear-focused organizations such as the EPRI Advanced Nuclear Technology program; World Nuclear Association and the U.K’s Office for Nuclear Regulation to share relevant information to and from COG's SMR Technology Forum (SMRTF) and its SMR Vendor Participant Program (SMR VPP). The SMRTF and SMR VPP have inter-related objectives and jointly support advancement and deployment of SMRs in Canada and around the world (see full list of SMRTF and SMR VPP participants in sidebar).

"We are seeing gradual progress towards this objective thanks to our experience bringing global nuclear industry stakeholders together."

"As SMR activities continue to expand, and COG members fulfill their visions, Alderson will oversee those activities with a focus on strengthening collaboration in this area.

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OPG marks major milestone in SMR development

On June 29, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) announced it had become the first utility in North America to take an ownership stake in a small modular reactor (SMR) project.

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