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Asked by: John Main, MLA Arviat North – Whale Cove

Asked of: Hon. David Akeeagok
Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

Number: 68-5(2)

Date: March 12, 2020

Subject: GN Uranium Policy Statement

Question 1: When was the Government of Nunavut Uranium Policy Statement officially released?

In June 2012, the Government of Nunavut released a policy statement on uranium mining.

Question 2: What consultation activities were conducted when the Government of Nunavut Uranium Policy Statement was being prepared?

The Government of Nunavut prepared the statement after a series of public uranium forums across the territory and commissioning an expert study of the regulatory and governance responsibilities related to uranium production as well as the key issues and concerns surrounding uranium development in the territory. In 2011, public forums on uranium were held in Iqaluit, Baker Lake and Cambridge Bay, representing each region. Each was a two-day event with information presented and opportunity for the public to ask questions orally and in written submissions to an expert panel. Some representatives from federal agencies were on hand to respond directly.

Question 3: Does the Government have plans to revisit and/or revise the Uranium Policy Statement?

At the present time, the Government of Nunavut has no plans to revisit or revise the policy statement. The principles remain largely the same and the policy is as applicable today as it was in 2012. The policy was developed through consideration informed by the expert committee and public consultation that was completed.

Question 4: How does the Government of Nunavut Uranium Policy Statement apply to the issue of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)?

Whereas the Statement outlines many principles related to the mining and development of uranium resources, the Statement also recognizes that uranium is subject to international agreements and national laws and that the Government of Nunavut supports the mandate and responsibilities of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. SMRs fall under the regulatory framework of the Commission. In principle, nuclear power generation will be an important part of global strategies for ensuring energy supplies while reducing reliance on greenhouse gas-emitting fossil fuels. The Government of Nunavut is confident that Canadian law and international agreements provide a reasonable level of assurance that uranium mined in Canada will be used for peaceful purposes, such as energy generation.

Question 5: Is there a process or avenue in place for Nunavut residents to inquire and/or provide suggestions on the Government of Nunavut Uranium Policy Statement?

GN Policy Statements are revised from time to time and on an as needed basis. The Uranium Policy Statement is an open document available from the EDT website at <https://gov.nu.ca/economic-development-and-transportation/documents/uranium-policy-statement>. Nunavut residents who would like to inquire or provide suggestions on this or any other matters of concern related to the resource sector may contact my department staff, Natalie O'Grady, Avatiliriniq Coordinator, at 867-975-7805, or through the GN website at <https://gov.nu.ca/contact-us>.