

April 7, 2020

Christopher Tyrell
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Room 1405, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A2

Dear Mr. Tyrell:

I am pleased to respond to your December 11, 2019, letter regarding the Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report on Darlington Nuclear Generating Station Refurbishment Project, referred herein as the "Committee Report".

I fully support the Committee Report and its recommendations, which are consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Auditor General of Ontario's 2018 Value-for-Money audit report on the Darlington refurbishment project. Ontario Power Generation (OPG) has already accepted all of the Auditor General of Ontario recommendations and is taking steps to implement them in full. My ministry is working with relevant government audit oversight bodies to track and verify OPG's progress in the timely implementation of the Auditor General's recommendations. I have shared a copy of the Committee Report with OPG to ensure that the Committee's recommendations are duly incorporated into OPG's actions going forward.

Let me assure you that the successful implementation of the Darlington refurbishment project remains a key priority for the government. The government is receiving regular updates from OPG on the progress of the refurbishment project and has also retained an Independent Oversight Advisor to monitor project execution and report to government on a regular basis. Furthermore, all costs associated with Darlington refurbishment are subject to ongoing review and scrutiny by Ontario's independent energy regulator, the Ontario Energy Board, under a public and transparent rate-setting process.

The construction phase for the first of four refurbishments (i.e., Unit 2) is now complete. The unit will begin the restart process before being connected to the electricity grid, subject to regulatory approvals from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and OPG's ability to do so safely given the current COVID-19 situation. In order to protect workers and ensure reliability of electricity supply during this unprecedented time, OPG will temporarily delay the start of the next unit refurbishment (i.e., Unit 3) which was scheduled to begin in May 2020.

I look forward to continuing our engagement on this and other files of interest to the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Stephen Rhodes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and the last name "Rhodes" clearly legible.

Stephen Rhodes
Deputy Minister

c: Ken Hartwick, President and Chief Executive Officer, OPG