

Hungary, No further extensions were permitted and OAH requested the project company to submit supplementary application

The National Atomic Energy Office (OAH) said that the documentation submitted for the project for the expansion of nuclear power plant Paks by building two additional reactors is not convincing enough for the issuance of the implementation permit by the regulator.

The deadline for the issuance of the permit expired on 30 September. As it was already extended by three months, no further extensions were permitted and OAH requested the project company to submit supplementary application.

The statement from the OAH said that the documentation submitted is very thorough in many respects, but in order for the authority to be satisfied that all the requirements are fully met, further assessment and analysis are needed in some areas, taking into account the recommendations from the IAEA mission carried out in parallel with the licensing process. To this end, the OAH will order a further completion of the licensing procedure.

With this delay, it is very unlikely that the new units will be operational before 2030, when the permits for the operation of the two existing reactors expires. MVM, the plant's operator, is already considering the extension of their operational life.

The delay also means that the Russian 10 million euros loan taken for the expansion project will have to be repaid starting from 2031 instead of 2026, thus decreasing its maturity by five years.

In January 2014, Hungarian Government has signed deal with Russia's Rosatom, with a goal to increase output of the power plant, from current 2,000 MW to 4,400 MW by adding two more reactors. Under the agreement, Russia will provide 10 billion euros loan for the construction of new unit in existing NPP, which is around 80 % of estimated construction cost. According to initial plan, first unit was supposed to become operational in 2023.

Currently, NPP Paks provides about a half of Hungary's total electricity generation and the new nuclear capacity will be even more significant following the closure of coal-fired TPP Matra.