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DECOMMISSIONING: FACTORS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

The cost and complexity of decommissioning depend on a number of factors including the regulatory regime at the time and the design and operating history of the facility. A decommissioning plan should take into account at least the following aspects:

Pre-operation:

- Design including capacity
- Mode of operation
- Operating life
- Funding arrangements for decommissioning

Operational life:

- Management of operational waste arisings and their storage or disposal
- Plant events, eg spills
- Design modifications and changes to the operating regime
- Market viability (to ensure funds will be in place to cope with the end of life liabilities of that facility)

Immediate post closure:

- Removal of immediate hazards, eg the fuel in the case of nuclear reactors
- Clean-out of plant and equipment
- De-manning and retraining or appointment of contractors and a move from routine operations towards multi-projects and/or programmes
- Plant maintenance

Decommissioning:

- Removal of plant and equipment
- Disposal of wastes
- Stabilising the site

Site remediation:

- Removal of final plant and surface and near-surface infrastructure consistent with the regulatory regime and intended re-use of the site
- De-licensing the site

Post-closure phases may run sequentially or semi-concurrently, or may be delayed depending on the local regulatory regime, national or corporate policy, and funding structures.

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