

Orano completes dismantling of US Crystal River reactor core

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In just under 2 years, the Orano Group has completed the cutting and conditioning of the reactor vessel and internals belonging to the pressurized water reactor at the Crystal River 3 nuclear power plant in Florida. This final stage marks the conclusion of the plant's dismantling and spent fuel management project, which began in 2021.

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Orano's Dismantling and Services teams carried out the cutting and conditioning of the reactor vessel and primary circuit components, using a patented segmentation process to limit the amount of waste and transport required for their removal to the dedicated disposal site in East Texas.

The irradiating parts of the reactor core, including the vessel's internal equipment, were cut up under water and by remote control in order to guarantee the highest level of safety.

The reactor pressure vessel or RPV, measuring around 10 meters in height and weighing several hundred tonnes, is the largest metal component in a pressurized water reactor. It is in the RPV that the chain reaction takes place, creating a large quantity of heat to produce the steam that ultimately serves to generate low-carbon electricity for the grid.

The Crystal River 3 decommissioning project has been carried out in an innovative financial and industrial framework, involving the transfer of ownership of the spent fuel and the operating license from North American utility Duke Energy to ADP (*Accelerated Decommissioning Partners*), a joint venture owned by NorthStar and Orano.

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Jean-Christophe Patout, Senior Executive Vice President in charge of the Orano Group's Dismantling and Services activities, commented: *"The completion of this project in such a short timeframe and employing an innovative process, bears testimony to Orano's proficiency in carrying out cleanup and dismantling projects in the United States. Our added value is underpinned by the proven know-how of our teams in the field as well as by Orano's dismantling expertise acquired in a number of countries, notably in France and Germany"*.

About Accelerated Decommissioning Partners

Accelerated Decommissioning Partners is a joint venture formed in 2017 by the NorthStar Group and Orano USA to conduct accelerated decommissioning operations (within a 5-year timeframe) on nuclear reactors in shutdown in the United States.

About Orano

As a recognized international operator in the field of nuclear materials, Orano delivers solutions to address present and future global energy and health challenges. Its expertise and mastery of cutting-edge technologies enable Orano to offer its customers high value-added products and services throughout the entire fuel cycle. Every day, the Orano group's 17,000 employees draw on their skills, unwavering dedication to safety and constant quest for innovation, with the commitment to develop know-how in the transformation and control of nuclear materials, for the climate and for a healthy and resource-efficient world, now and tomorrow.