

Planning contract for a shaft upgrade at the former Asse II waste repository

Following a public tendering procedure Thyssen Schachtbau GmbH has won the contract to undertake design and approval planning for upgrading the winding system in number 2 shaft at the former Asse II waste repository.

Between 1967 and 1978 the old Asse II mine in Lower Saxony, which formerly served as a test site and final waste repository, was used for the storage of some 126,000 drums of low and medium-level radioactive waste. Because rock movements and uncontrolled brine inflow now pose a risk of radioactivity being released into the biosphere the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS) in Salzgitter, after weighing up the various options available, decided that the waste material currently stored below ground should be brought back to the surface.

In order to be able to transport the waste containers back to the surface via the Asse II winding shaft the current winding installation in number 2 shaft has to be upgraded and adapted both to meet operational requirements and comply with the current radiation protection guidelines. It was against this background that Thyssen Schachtbau was awarded the contract to draw up design plans for the renovation of the winding installation in number 2 shaft that would satisfy the constraints imposed by mining and nuclear safety legislation. The concept planning work is to be developed to 'approval ready' status and suitable approval plans are to be drawn up for this purpose. The results of the planning work are expected to be ready by early 2012.

The quality and bid price of the tender submitted by Thyssen Schachtbau ultimately proved decisive in the very competitive tendering process and the company will now be able to exploit the extensive experience it has acquired from shaft construction projects dating back nearly 140 years.

Dr.-Ing. Axel Weißenborn, Mülheim an der Ruhr, August 2010

Sources:

<http://www.bfs.de>

<http://www.endlager-asse.de>

<http://www.schachtbau-bergbau.de/>

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