Savannah River Site Watch

Savannah River Site Watch
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Plans to Export V.C. Summer Reactor Vessel and Pumps Reveal Project to Restart Twin Units May be Faltering;
NRC Export License Application States Ukraine is Recipient

Columbia, SC – An export application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the Westinghouse Electric Company reveals that plans are being laid to export "One Reactor Vessel and Four Primary Reactor Coolant Pumps" from the V.C. Summer site in South Carolina, where efforts to build two Westinghouse AP1000 reactors failed in 2017, after a decade of construction at the site.

The NRC export application raises serious questions about the fate of not only key equipment at the site but also the status of a secretive effort to restart construction of the two abandoned reactors, according to a public-interest organization monitoring the project.

See NRC export license application by Westinghouse, October 21, 2026:
https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML2630/ML26302A238.pdf

Plans are currently proceeding under a Memorandum of Understanding between Santee Cooper and Brookfield Asset Management to assess the possibility of restarting the project to finish construction of both V.C. Summer units 2 and 3. The export license application would likely be for the reactor vessel - in storage - of unit 3, which is far less complete than the project for unit 2 (and which already has the reactor vessel installed).

The export plan likely is likely an indication that contingency plans are being made if project restart efforts for one or both units fail. Neither Santee Cooper, the state-owned electricity utility which owns the project, nor Brookfield Asset Management nor

Westinghouse have yet commented publicly on the export license application, which was posted in the NRC's on-line digital library (ADAMS) on October 29, 2026.

According to the NRC export license application, the shipment could be on or after April 1, 2028, with a "proposed expiration" date of the license of April 1, 2033. April 1, 2028 is a day after the day (March 31, 2028) by which Brookfield has to present a "Final Investment Decision" (FID) plan, as agreed with Santee Cooper (formally known as the South Carolina Public Service Authority), for the fate of "Fairfield Nuclear Project" – whether to proceed or not and at what cost and with what technical challenges. (See Santee Cooper Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), top of page 20: https://www.santeecooper.com/About/_pdfs/Santee-Cooper-2026-Triennial-IRP.pdf)

The NRC export license application, dated October 21, 2026, indicates that National Nuclear Energy Generating Company (Energoatom) in Kyiv, Ukraine would be the recipient of the equipment. The application further reveals that the equipment would be used for Khmelnytsky Nuclear Power Plant Unit 5, the first of two AP1000 units sought by Ukraine. (See Energoatom news release of April 15, 2024 at "At the Khmelnytsky NPP, a project on the construction of Units 5 and 6 using the American Westinghouse technology started.")

As the extremely heavy reactor vessel was transported from the port of Charleston via a special, articulated train car it will likely have to be transported off the site in that same manner if the transport were to go forward. It is unknown if Ukraine has a "heavy lift derrick" to life the reactor vessel off a ship or on arrival at Khemelnytsky or if it an articulated train car would be available to transport the vessel in Ukraine.

"That Westinghouse has already applied to export a rector vessel from the V.C. Summer site is an indication that plans to restart both terminated reactors are faltering," said Tom Clements of Savannah River Site Watch, a public-interest group based in Columbia, SC. Clements spearheaded a successful intervention before the South Carolina Public Service Commission from 2008 to 2017 with the environmental group Friends of the Earth to oppose the construction of the new V.C. Summer reactors. "Westinghouse, Santee Cooper and Brookfield Asset Management must promptly explain why the reactor vessel export application was submitted to the NRC," Clements added.

Clements found the export license application by searching the NRC's digital library on others matters and was "surprised" to run across it by chance, he says.

Export of the unit 2 equipment could also take place, as SRS Watch speculated in an August 2025 report: *Economic, Technical and Regulatory Challenges Confound Restart of the Terminated V.C. Summer Nuclear Reactor Construction Project in South Carolina*.

“I find it of concern that those party to the reactor vessel export have not revealed their plan to the people of South Carolina, who paid billions of dollars for the failed project, with Dominion customers still paying 5.22 percent of their monthly bill for it,” said Clements.

See links to key South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff documents on the 5.22% monthly “failed reactor project charge,” which Clements has asked the PSC to rule that the change must be shown on the Dominion bill: https://srswatch.org/secret-5-22-monthly-charge-for-terminated-nuclear-reactor-project-at-v-c-summer-slamming-dominions-electricity-customers-to-go-on-for-13-more-years/)

“I pointed out in testimony to the South Carolina Public Service Commission on Dominion Energy’s Integrated Resource Plan, the company is listed on the application in a section on “U. S. Suppliers and/or other U. S. Parties to the Export,” said Clements. “As Dominion has publicly disavowed any involvement in restart of the V.C. Summer reactor project, the public needs an explanation if the company is involved in the component export or not,” said Clements. The export license application was submitted by Clements for the record of the PSC’s November 2, 2026 IRP hearing.

Concerning export of the old, abandoned equipment to Ukraine, Clements said “Because the NRC has not inspected the equipment since the construction license was terminated in 2019, Ukraine should be extremely diligent concerning the quality of the equipment. The reactor vessel has been sitting in storage for a decade and its quality can’t be guaranteed by the NRC,” added Clements. “It is unclear how Ukraine could pay for the V.C. Summer equipment and we wonder if the US Ex-Im Bank could be called upon to finance it, a cost that must not burden US taxpayers,” said Clements.

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Note: A list of background documents on the Santee Cooper and Brookfield decision timeline with the V.C. Summer units 2 & 3 restart project project are available on request or can be found at www.srswatch.org, at post of November 10, 2026