

TEPCO secures summer capacity, starts nuclear unit

Tokyo Electric Power Company has secured a combined 67 GW of power capacity for July and August 2009 in preparation for maximum power demand of around 61 GW in normal summer temperatures. The July-August supply includes three gigawatts each month of additional capacity from the increased run rates and test runs at the recently started-up unit seven at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant, as well as from power purchases, according to TEPCO. Japan's summer power demand is typically over July-September but peaks during July-August. For September, the company has also secured a combined 64 GW of power capacity for its anticipated maximum power demand of around 54.5 GW for normal temperatures, the company says. TEPCO has not yet received formal approvals from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and local authorities to start commercial operations of the nuclear reactor. However, approvals are expected by early July, as the number seven unit at the reactor recently maximised its output to 100 per cent. This unit is the first to be restarted at the giant Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant, which has a total capacity of 8.212 GW over seven units, all of which had been put on hold following a major earthquake in July 2007. TEPCO is now expected to seek approvals from METI and local authorities to restart the 1.356 GW unit six at the plant at the end of June, following the expected completion of remaining tests at the reactor.

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