

# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LGA EXECUTIVE

Special Interest Group on Radioactive Waste Management and Decommissioning

April 2012



## Introduction

This year has seen further significant developments in nuclear legacy management and in NuLeAF's associated work programme. Developments include:

- continuing controversy around the disposal of Low Level radioactive Waste (LLW) to landfill, including Secretary of State approval of an appeal against refusal of permission for the disposal of LLW to the hazardous waste landfill site at King's Cliffe in Northamptonshire;
- further strategy development by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, including assessment of the potential for consolidating the treatment and storage of radioactive wastes at a smaller number of sites;
- the final phase of work of the West Cumbria MRWS<sup>1</sup> Partnership, which will culminate in a report about whether to participate in the siting process for a Geological Disposal Facility;
- MoD consultation on approaches to dismantling laid-up nuclear submarines and managing the resultant radioactive wastes;
- application to the Infrastructure Planning Commission to build a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point C, including arrangements for managing radioactive wastes and spent fuel;
- a renewed focus on nuclear emergency planning following the Fukushima accident and Dr Mike Weightman's report on its implications.

NuLeAF is closely involved in developments to ensure that local authority views and interests are recognised and addressed.

This report outlines NuLeAF's remit and objectives, support within local government, organisation and main activities.

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<sup>1</sup> MRWS stands for Managing Radioactive Wastes Safely, which is the name given to the Government programme to manage higher activity radioactive wastes in the long-term. The central feature of the MRWS programme is the work to find a site for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF).



## Remit and Objectives

NuLeAF's remit encompasses all aspects of the management of the UK's nuclear legacy. This includes the implications for legacy management of any developments (including construction of new nuclear power stations) that are likely to impact on that management.

NuLeAF's primary aims are:

- to provide a mechanism to identify, where possible, a common, local government viewpoint on nuclear legacy management issues;
- to represent that viewpoint, or the range of views of its member authorities, in discussion with national bodies, including Government, the NDA and the regulators;
- to seek to influence policy and strategy for nuclear legacy management in the interests of affected communities; and
- to develop the capacity of its member authorities to engage with nuclear legacy management at a local level.

At its AGM in October 2011, NuLeAF adopted an updated set of strategic objectives. Publication of the objectives on NuLeAF's website helps ensure that NuLeAF's work is open and transparent. The objectives can be found in Policy Statement 8 on NuLeAF's [website](#).

## Local Government Support

NuLeAF has 105 member authorities. Membership comprises 17 contributing authorities, 81 corresponding members, 3 National Park Authorities and 4 NFLA co-optees. During the past year, two authorities (Lancashire County Council and Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council) ceased to be contributing members and reverted to corresponding membership; and two authorities joined as corresponding members (South Ribble Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council).

The list of member authorities is attached as Annex 1.

The benefits of becoming a contributing member authority include:

- A regular e-mail newsletter highlighting latest developments and updates
- Free registration at NuLeAF seminars and workshops.
- Voting rights at the NuLeAF Steering Group and AGM.

All member authorities are invited to attend the NuLeAF Steering Group and are kept informed about developments and activities through a regular e-bulletin (see below).



A decision was taken at the 2011 AGM not to increase the membership fee for the FY 2012-13 in light of the severity of local government financial restrictions. Fees have remained unchanged since April 2009.

## **Organisation**

### ***Steering Group***

NuLeAF's work is overseen by a Steering Group (SG) of elected members from member authorities. At the AGM in October 2011 Councillor Tim Knowles from Cumbria County Council was re-elected as Chair, and Councillor Neil Swannick of Manchester City Council re-elected as Vice Chair.

The SG meets on average four times a year. The following meetings were held during FY 11-12:

13 April, 2011	Town Hall, Manchester
6 July, 2011	Local Government House, London
21 October, 2011	Town Hall, Manchester
25 January, 2012	Local Government House, London

Copies of reports to the SG can be found at [Steering Group Reports](#), as can minutes of the meetings.

### ***Staffing***

NuLeAF currently has two full-time staff members, employed on two year contracts:

Fred Barker	Executive Director
Catherine Draper	Business Support Co-ordinator

Both members of staff are hosted by Suffolk County Council, a leading NuLeAF member authority. Fred Barker has given notice that he will not be taking up the option to renew his contract when it expires on 5 June 2012. The recruitment process to appoint a successor is well advanced.

### ***Funding***

For FY 11-12, funding was secured from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and from 17 contributing member local authorities. In addition a sustained and remunerated input was made to the West Cumbrian MRWS Partnership, and a discrete piece of work was undertaken for Somerset County Council.



Partial funding for FY 12-13 has already been achieved, including an increased funding contribution from the NDA. Possibilities for increasing the level of commissioned work are also being explored, particularly on radioactive waste management and new build. Indications are that the level of support from contributing member local authorities membership should hold for the new financial year.

### ***Working Groups***

NuLeAF has an Officer Working Group known as the Radioactive Waste Planning Group. This evolved from the Low Level Waste Officer's Working Group and discusses the development of strategies and associated issues in areas such as the coverage of radioactive waste in Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, the disposal of radioactive waste to landfill sites and associated planning issues. Regular attendance at this group has increased over the past 12 months with wider local authority engagement with radioactive waste issues. The work of this group informs decision-making at the NuLeAF Steering Group and inputs to meetings with other national bodies.

### ***Liaison with the LGA***

Waste portfolio members are kept informed with regular e-bulletins and are invited to attend Steering Group meetings.

### ***Scottish Local Authorities***

Steps are taken to ensure liaison with NuLeAF's sister organisation north of the border, the Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances (SCCORS).

### ***New Nuclear Local Authorities Group (NNLAG)***

As an organisation, NuLeAF does not take a view on whether new nuclear power stations should be built, but it does consider the decommissioning and radioactive waste management implications.

NuLeAF liaises with the New Nuclear Authorities Group, itself an LGA SIG, in respect of waste management issues for new build nuclear stations. A [joint protocol](#) has been developed to define the working relationship of the two groups.

## Key Activities

### *Representational Activities*

NuLeAF's work programme addresses:

- **The siting process for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for higher activity radioactive wastes.** NuLeAF continues to represent the interests of local government through attendance at: the Geological Disposal Implementation Board; regular liaison meetings with Government and the NDA; and the Regulatory Interface Management Group.
- **Development and implementation of UK strategy for managing Low Level Waste.** NuLeAF participates in the NDA's LLW Programme Delivery Group and is joining a new NDA working group which will develop aspects of strategy for LLW disposal. This working group will seek to develop a more broadly supported approach to establishing LLW disposal routes.
- **Development of NDA Strategy.** NuLeAF is a new member of two NDA groups that input into strategy development on (a) integrated waste management and (b) site restoration. NuLeAF has also made representations to NDA about the case for a Community Benefits Protocol.
- **Development of MoD approach to the Submarine Dismantling Project.** NuLeAF has participated in the MoD SDP Strategic Environmental Assessment and Consultation Sub Group and responded to consultation.
- **Responding to national consultations.** NuLeAF responded to 4 consultations during 2011-12. These were on:
  - MoD proposals for the dismantling of decommissioned nuclear submarines and the storage of the resultant radioactive wastes (Submarine Dismantling Project)
  - NDA proposals for strategy development on Integrated Waste Management
  - NDA Draft Business Plan 2012-15
  - the Government's proposals for managing the UK's stockpile of separated plutonium.

All consultation responses can be viewed on the NuLeAF website [here](#).

- **Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM).** NuLeAF maintains its links with CoRWM.



## ***Support to Member Authorities***

This has included:

- **Dissemination of information and guidance** through use of the NuLeAF website, circulation of e-bulletins (4 issues in FY 11-12), and publication of Case Studies (2 in FY 11-12). Two Briefing Papers were also produced; on Interim Advice on approaches to Radioactive Waste Management in Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, and Radioactive Waste Management and New Nuclear Power Stations.
- **Opportunities for discussion:** a seminar was held in London (9 March) to brief local authority representatives on spatial planning and radioactive waste management issues. Representatives from NDA, Low Level Waste Repository Ltd, EDF Energy and The Planning Inspectorate gave presentations. A seminar report is available on the NuLeAF [website](#) .
- **Improving engagement between member authorities and NDA, Site Licensee Companies (SLCs) and regulators.** NuLeAF has inaugurated a programme of meetings aimed at improving communication and engagement between local authorities with nuclear licensed sites outside Cumbria with NDA, SLCs and the regulatory authorities. Reports from the meetings are available on the [website](#).
- **Advice and assistance:** NuLeAF continues to make an active, and remunerated, contribution to the work of the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Partnership. It has also provided advice to Somerset County Council on the radioactive waste aspects of the Hinkley Point C planning application.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Over the last year, NuLeAF has continued to make progress in engaging and influencing Government and the NDA in the complex arena of nuclear legacy management. NuLeAF has also strengthened its relationship with member authorities, which helps to ensure that the views of local government are carried into national policy and strategy development and implementation, and that services are provided that assist member authorities at a local level.

## NuLeAF Support as at 31 March 2012

### **Allerdale Borough Council - contributing**

Arun District Council - corresponding  
Ashford District Council - corresponding  
Barrow Borough Council - corresponding  
Birmingham City Council - corresponding  
Blackpool Borough Council - corresponding  
Braintree Borough Council - corresponding  
Breckland District Council - corresponding  
Broadland District Council - corresponding  
Bromsgrove District Council - corresponding  
Caerphilly County Borough Council - corresponding  
Carlisle City Council – corresponding  
Cornwall Council - corresponding  
Chelmsford Borough Council - corresponding  
Chesterfield Borough Council – corresponding  
Cheshire West and Chester Council - corresponding

### **Copeland Borough Council – contributing**

### **Cumbria County Council - contributing**

Dacorum District Council - corresponding  
Denbighshire County Council – corresponding  
Derby City Council – corresponding  
Derbyshire Dales District Council - corresponding

### **Dorset County Council – contributing**

Dorset Fire and Rescue – corresponding  
Durham County Council - corresponding  
Eden District Council - corresponding  
Essex County Council- corresponding  
Flintshire County Council – NFLA Co-optee  
Forest of Dean District Council - corresponding  
Forest Heath District Council - corresponding  
Fylde Borough Council - corresponding  
Gosport Borough Council - corresponding  
Great Yarmouth Borough Council - corresponding  
Greater London Authority - corresponding  
Gwynedd County Council - corresponding  
Halton Borough Council – corresponding

### **Hampshire County Council - contributing**

Harlow District Council - corresponding

### **Hartlepool Borough Council - contributing**

Hyndburn Borough Council - corresponding

Kent County Council - corresponding  
Kings Lynn & West Norfolk District Council - corresponding  
Lancashire County Council - corresponding  
Lancaster City Council - corresponding  
Leeds City Council – corresponding  
Leicestershire County Council - corresponding  
Lewes District Council - corresponding  
Liverpool City Council - corresponding  
London Borough of Bromley - corresponding  
London Borough of Hackney - corresponding  
London Borough of Harrow - corresponding  
London Borough of Newham - corresponding  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets - corresponding  
Maldon District Council – corresponding  
**Manchester City Council - contributing**  
Melton Borough Council – corresponding  
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service - corresponding  
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council - corresponding  
Newport City Council – NFLA Co-optee  
Norfolk County Council – corresponding  
Northamptonshire County Council - corresponding  
North East Derbyshire District Council - corresponding  
North Norfolk District Council - corresponding  
Norwich City Council - corresponding  
Nottinghamshire County Council – corresponding  
Northumberland County Council - corresponding  
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council – corresponding  
**Oxfordshire County Council - contributing**  
Pembrokeshire County Council - corresponding  
**Plymouth City Council - contributing**  
Preston City Council – NFLA Co-optee  
Purbeck District Council - corresponding  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council – NFLA Co-optee  
Rutland County Council - corresponding  
Scarborough District Council - corresponding  
**Sedgemoor District Council – contributing**  
**Shepway District Council - contributing**  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - corresponding  
**Somerset County Council – contributing**  
**South Gloucester Council – contributing**  
South Lakeland District Council – corresponding  
South Ribble Borough Council - corresponding  
Southampton City Council - corresponding  
South Norfolk District Council – corresponding



Stroud District Council - corresponding  
Spelthorne Borough Council - corresponding  
Staffordshire County Council – corresponding  
**Suffolk Coastal District Council – contributing**  
**Suffolk County Council – contributing**  
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council - corresponding  
Taunton Deane Borough Council - corresponding  
Tendring District Council - corresponding  
Tunbridge Wells District Council - corresponding  
Vale of the White Horse District Council - corresponding  
Wansbeck District Council - corresponding  
Waveney District Council - corresponding  
West Berkshire District Council - corresponding  
West Lancashire District Council - corresponding  
West Lindsey District Council - corresponding  
**West Somerset District Council – contributing**  
Worcestershire County Council - corresponding  
**Ynys Mon County Council – contributing**

## **NATIONAL PARKS AUTHORITIES**

Lake District National Park Authority  
North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority  
Snowdonia National Park Authority

### **Total - 105 members**

17 CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS  
81 CORRESPONDING  
4 NFLA CO-OPTees  
3 NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITIES