

E-BULLETIN

May 2008,
Issue 10



Welcome to Issue 10 of the e-bulletin. This covers:

- the anticipated White Paper on the implementation framework for a geological disposal facility (GDF)
- an update on interim storage of higher activity wastes
- the development of strategy for managing Low Level Wastes (LLW)
- the NDA's Business Plan and funding arrangements
- plans for the review of NDA Strategy
- results of the review of NDA local engagement arrangements
- consultation on funding guidance for decommissioning new nuclear power stations
- NuLeAF publications
- NuLeAF staffing
- payments from member authorities for 08/09, and
- dates for the diary.

Implementation Framework for a Geological Disposal Facility

It is anticipated that the White Paper on the implementation framework for siting a GDF will be published within the next few weeks. This will be accompanied by an invitation to communities to express an interest in the possibility of participating in the siting process.

All local authorities in England and Wales will be informed about the publication of the White Paper and launch of the siting process by letter from Government. This will be accompanied by press statements and a tiered approach to information provision about geological disposal and siting on the DEFRA website.

NuLeAF will be issuing a joint press release with the LGA, publishing an article in Local Government First and launching a section on its website dedicated to the siting process. There will also be an LGA 'web event' on 19 June, where members and officers can contribute to an on-line discussion about the implementation framework.

If any local authority wishes to discuss potential involvement in the siting process with NuLeAF, please contact fred.barker@nuleaf.org.uk. For a more detailed update on developments see [Update on GDF Implementation Framework](#).

Update on Interim Storage of Higher Activity Wastes

The NDA has undertaken a review of interim storage arrangements for ILW and HLW. The findings are being submitted to Government for approval. The review addresses the robustness of current facilities against timescale changes, planning constraints, monitoring and inspection regimes and future waste arisings. It is anticipated that a public domain

version of the findings will be published in June, and that these will be discussed at a stakeholder workshop in the summer.

In its published strategy NDA also committed to investigate opportunities for 'optimisation' of ILW storage at a smaller number of sites. It is understood that the proportion of ILW that might be involved amounts to about 5% of the ILW inventory that will arise at NDA sites before 2040. The main focus of potential consolidation is at southern Magnox and UKAEA sites. For further information see Section 5 in [Update on NDA Developments](#).

Developing NDA Strategy for Managing LLW

The NDA has established a national nuclear industry LLW Strategy Group (LSG) to promote innovation, value for money, application of the waste hierarchy and planning for effective approaches to disposal. The LSG will play an important part in the development of the NDA's LLW Strategy.

The first meeting of the LSG on 17 April heard that a preliminary strategic review of LLW management has identified the opportunity to achieve a 20% reduction in the NDA's LLW liability, and an extension of the life of the LLW Repository near Drigg to 2070. NDA stresses that the work represents an initial view and requires full discussion, consultation and review.

The current step is to seek feedback from LSG members on four topical strategies, covering:

- application of the waste hierarchy
- waste packaging
- waste transportation and
- waste tracking/inventory management.

Following comment, the topical strategies will be developed to inform preparation of the new LLW strategy.

For further details about the process of strategy development and the content of the four topical strategies, see [Update on LLW Strategy](#).

NDA Business Plan and Funding

Following consultation, the NDA has published an approved Business Plan, setting out detailed funding levels for its 19 sites for 08-09 ([Approved Business Plan Published](#)).

NuLeAF's comments on the draft Business Plan ([Comments on draft Business Plan](#)) highlighted concerns that current funding arrangements do not allow the NDA to drive forward effective programmes of work that build and maintain stakeholder confidence. The comments suggested that it would be timely for Government to identify alternative funding arrangements.

The House of Commons Business and Enterprise Committee have recently reached similar conclusions:

We believe the NDA's funding model is unsustainable ... Nuclear decommissioning is too important to be left to the mercy of changing priorities in the Treasury and uncertain commercial income; as the Permanent Secretary acknowledged, a new system of funding is

needed, and work on this needs to begin urgently. ('Funding the NDA', Fourth Report 07-08, April 08, HC 394, para 37)

Government has initiated a review of the NDA's funding model and will make a formal response to the HoC Committee by 7 June.

Key points from the Approved Business Plan include:

- The re-prioritisation of funds from lower hazard sites to Sellafield is driven by the need for hazard and risk reduction. A third party has been commissioned to provide assurance that additional work at Sellafield is essential and NDA will seek to minimise adverse impacts at other sites.
- NDA recognises that a more 'sophisticated' approach to decision-making about priorities is needed. Work is underway to develop a 'Value Framework' (see Section 2 of [Update on NDA Developments](#)).
- As a contingency, NDA has asked Magnox Electric to identify the minimum level of funding required to maintain 'safe and secure sites'. It describes this as a planning exercise, not an implementation programme. Magnox Electric has initiated a programme to identify options and assess impacts, including skills and socio-economic issues. Briefings have been provided to Site Stakeholder Groups. A report is to be submitted to the NDA in autumn 08, to inform NDA decision-making on spending for subsequent years.

NDA Strategy Review

The NDA published its first Strategy in March 06 and is now preparing to undertake a full review, which will be informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

The review will involve a new system for managing the NDA's strategy, based on three elements: the NDA Strategy Document, Topic Strategies and Site Guidance. The Strategy Document will consolidate key areas of strategy across various subjects, but the development of strategy will take place primarily through work on Topic Strategies. This will mean NDA strategy is formulated at a rate appropriate to each topic. Engagement plans are being developed for each topic, so stakeholders can choose which ones to get involved in.

Under the new system, each Site Licence Company is likely to be issued with guidance derived from the Topic Strategies.

The new system will be discussed at the NDA's National Stakeholder Group in May, and reported to the NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) at its meeting on 7 July.

Results of the Review of NDA Local Engagement Arrangements

At its meeting in January, the SG considered a detailed report on the NDA's review of local engagement arrangements and agreed to submit a set of proposals to the NDA. These proposals were subsequently published as Briefing Paper 12 ([BP 12, Jan 08](#)).

As a result of the review, the NDA has prepared a 'final draft' of revised guidance for Site Licence Companies and Site Stakeholder Groups. This will be available for comment on the NDA website (see [NDA Engagement Update](#) and document LAR2.2). Comments on the draft are being sought by 30 June.

Consultation on Funding Guidance for Decommissioning New Nuclear Power Stations

The Energy Bill will require any operator of a new nuclear power station to have a Funded Decommissioning Programme (FDP), approved by the Secretary of State. On 22 February the Government published for consultation two sets of draft guidance on what a FDP should contain ([Consultation of FDP Guidance](#)). At its meeting on 30 April, the SG agreed a set of comments as outlined in [Comments on Funding Guidance](#). The deadline for submitting comments to Government is 16 May 08.

NuLeAF Publications

Since the February issue of the e-bulletin, NuLeAF has published three Briefing Papers:

- Briefing Paper 13, 'Briefing for Local Authority Planners': to assist local authority planners identify the radioactive waste management issues that should be taken into account in preparing or updating Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks ([BP13](#)).
- Briefing Paper 14, 'Community Funds and Radwaste Facilities': proposing a national framework for community packages that should, in appropriate form, be associated with the development of new radioactive waste management facilities ([BP14](#)).
- Briefing Paper 15, 'Measures to Enhance the Retrievability of Wastes from a Geological Repository': with the aim of promoting an understanding of how retrievability can be achieved in practice, and how it is likely to change over time ([BP15](#)).

NuLeAF Staffing

Christine del Corral is leaving NuLeAF after working as PA and Administrator for the last two years. The SG has placed on record its thanks to Christine for her substantial contribution to NuLeAF's work.

NuLeAF's new PA and Administrator is Catherine Draper, who took up her post on 28 April. Catherine's e-mail address is catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk.

Payments from Member Authorities

NuLeAF will be writing to corresponding member authorities to ask that they become contributing members, based on an annual payment. This contribution is needed for NuLeAF to be able to sustain and develop its work as outlined above.

NuLeAF operates a sliding scale of membership fees, based on the number of residents within a member authority area. The AGM in October 07 agreed that the fees for 08-09 should be as follows:

| Population | Annual Contribution 08-09 |
|------------|---------------------------|
| Up to 100k | £605 |
| 100k-200k | £905 |
| 200k-500k | £1210 |
| 500k-1m | £1850 |
| Above 1m | £2420 |

It is important for NuLeAF's future financial viability that it receives financial contributions from a larger number of its member authorities, so corresponding members are encouraged to make an annual payment.

Steering Group Meetings

7 July Steering Group, LG House, London
29 October Steering Group and AGM, Town Hall, Manchester

Contacting NuLeAF

NuLeAF can be contacted via the Secretariat c/o Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX, Tel: 01473 264833 e-mail: catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk.