

E-BULLETIN

October 2010,
Issue 20



Welcome to Issue 20 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

- the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and NDA budget
- consultation on draft NDA strategy
- radioactive waste management and new nuclear power stations
- developments in Low Level Waste Management
- the process for siting a Geological Disposal Facility
- the Submarine Dismantling Project
- outcome of the NuLeAF AGM on 20 October and
- dates for the diary.

Comprehensive Spending Review and NDA Budget

The NDA has announced that it will be able to maintain expenditure at current levels as a result of its CSR settlement. It adds that "laying out choices" and how it intends to allocate funds across its sites will be presented in its forthcoming Draft Business Plan in early December.

Consultation on Draft NDA Strategy

Consultation on the NDA's draft Strategy started on 1 September and will finish on 24 November. The consultation is a requirement of the Energy Act and follows on from the NDA's first Strategy which was adopted in 2006. The proposed Strategy is accessible via the NDA website at [Consultation Details](#).

The draft strategy contains a number of proposals which, if ultimately adopted, will require an enhanced level of engagement between NDA sites and the relevant local authorities. The issues for discussion include:

- the process for defining 'interim states' en route to achieving site restoration;
- the potential for on-site treatment, storage or disposal facilities to have a multi-site or national role and likely scale and timing of radioactive waste 'imports' (and whether this is within the scope of current planning permissions and consistent with local development plans);
- the potential for the use of off-site facilities for the treatment, storage or disposal of radioactive wastes (at other nuclear sites, or other waste management facilities within or outside the area), and the implications for the transport of radioactive materials from the site;
- the potential for local authority participation in assessments to identify preferred options for interim states, waste management and disposal, facility decommissioning, and management of contaminated land; and

- (where applicable) the relationship between restoration at NDA sites and the development of new nuclear power stations at neighbouring sites.

NuLeAF will be considering what role it might play in helping to facilitate engagement on these topics.

Alongside consultation on the draft Strategy, the NDA is preparing a draft 'Framework for handling new developments related to the management of radioactive wastes'. The stated purpose is to "promote sound decision-making and effective engagement with local people, industry regulators and planning authorities". It seeks to set out:

- the scope of the developments to which it applies
- top level principles for assessing, proposing and implementing proposals
- guidance on planning and decision-making
- a commentary on local community benefits and the planning system.

Some potential developments – particularly those with a multi-site or national role, and/or significant impacts – will raise questions about the need for associated community funds/benefits. This is an issue that NuLeAF has previously addressed in two Briefing Papers. The latest - Briefing Paper 16 (May 2009) – provided guidance on the use of planning obligations with regard to developments for radioactive waste management. The paper is available on the NuLeAF website at [BP16](#). The NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) meeting on 20 October agreed that it would be timely to prepare an updated Briefing Paper, which took account of recent developments. A draft will be considered by the SG at its meeting in January 2011.

The SG also agreed that the following themes should be highlighted in NuLeAF's response to consultation on NDA Strategy:

- the need for improved local engagement with local authorities about site restoration at NDA sites;
- the need for a clear and widely supported framework for handling new developments, including early engagement with planning authorities and an appropriate approach to community benefits; and
- the need to make effective use of NuLeAF as an existing engagement mechanism at a national level.

Further detail is contained in a report to the Steering Group which is available on the NuLeAF website at [SG October item 4](#).

Radioactive Waste Management and New Nuclear Power Stations

An update on new build developments includes:

- **Re-Consultation on Energy National Policy Statements (NPSs):** the Government launched a re-consultation on revised draft energy NPSs on 18 October. The consultation material is available on the DECC website at [DECC NPS Consultation](#). A preliminary review of the revised draft Nuclear NPS indicates that the Government has addressed a number of the main points made by NuLeAF in its response to the initial consultation. The SG meeting on 20 October agreed to delegate authority to the Chair and Vice Chair to authorise the submission of further comments. The consultation runs until 24 January 2011.

- **Generic Design Assessment (GDA):** The Environment Agency (EA) is assessing the environmental impacts of new reactor designs through an approach called Generic Design Assessment (GDA). This enables the acceptability of generic environmental aspects to be assessed before individual site applications are made. The EA launched a consultation on its detailed GDA findings for the EPR (AREVA/EDF) and AP1000 (Westinghouse) reactor designs in June. A NuLeAF response to the consultation was approved by the Strategy Review Group on 1 October and is available on the NuLeAF website at [Comments on GDA](#).
- **Second Stage Consultation on Hinkley Point C:** The second stage consultation on EdF's proposals to build a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point in Somerset closed on 4 October. The proposals were heavily criticised by NuLeAF member authorities - Sedgemoor DC, Somerset CC and West Somerset DC - on the grounds of inadequate information and mitigations measures. EdF has said that it does not plan to offer a third stage of consultation (see [BBC News - EDF Energy: 'More consultation not needed'](#)).
- **NuLeAF input to Somerset Authorities:** The Executive Director (ED) has been in discussion with officers at Somerset CC about input into a potential work programme on the radioactive waste management aspects of EdF's proposals for new build at Hinkley Point. On the approval of the Chair and Vice Chair, it is proposed that NuLeAF fulfil an advisory and peer review role. This proposal has been incorporated in a Topic Paper that will be considered by the Somerset Strategic Project Board in November.
- **Somerset Authorities Seminar 20 September:** This heard presentations from DECC, EdF, the Somerset local authorities, Copeland BC, the IPC, the Nuclear Industry Association (NIA) and Robert McCracken QC. The seminar provided a good opportunity to hear about the experience of the Hinkley Point Planning Performance Agreement, the scope and basis for mitigation of impacts, the role of the IPC, and the high level feasibility study of spent fuel management options. Further information on the latter is due to be published later in the autumn. The presentations are available on the Sedgemoor DC website at [New Nuclear Build Document Library](#).
- **New Nuclear Local Authorities Group (NNLAG):** Following a fringe event on 7 July at the LGA Conference in Bournemouth, NNLAG has been established as a Special Interest Group of the LGA, with Somerset County Council in a lead role. NuLeAF has been represented at meetings leading to the setting up of the group, and is establishing a good working relationship with its secretariat. It is envisaged that the new group will draw on NuLeAF's expertise and experience when addressing issues associated with the management of radioactive wastes.

Developments in Low Level Waste Management

An update on national developments includes:

- **UK Strategy for the Management of LLW from the Nuclear Industry** – following approval by Government, the Strategy was published in August and is available on the NDA website at [NDA launches UK strategy for managing low level radioactive waste](#).
- **NuLeAF Briefing Paper on LLW Strategy** – this Briefing Paper provides a high level commentary on the strategy and the implications for local authorities. It covers: an overview of the strategy; the treatment of key issues in the strategy; the implications for local authority plans and for development control; and a summary of key comments. The Briefing Paper is available on the NuLeAF website at [BP19](#).

- **Combustible wastes** – LLWR Ltd introduced a new combustible waste treatment service in October 2010. Under a new framework agreement, the company is offering a range of 'service providers' and facilities for the treatment of combustible wastes. In the UK, these are: Abbot Nuclear Consulting using the Tradebe facility at Fawley; Energy Solutions using the Inutec facility at Winfrith and the Grundon facility at Colnbrook; and Studsvik, also using the Tradebe facility at Fawley.
- **On-site disposal:** LLWR Ltd has produced draft business case guidance for Site Licensee Companies (SLCs) who wish to consider developing LLW disposal facilities at existing nuclear sites. The draft is with NDA for comment.
- **LLWR deliverables:** LLWR Ltd has also updated the 'deliverables' page on its website at [LLWR Deliverables](#). This includes access, for example, to documentation on: waste management hierarchy guidance, metal treatment services, LLWR operational strategy and a transport feasibility study.

The most significant local development concerns the appeal into refusal of planning permission to dispose of LLW to the hazardous waste landfill site at **King's Cliffe in Northamptonshire**. The public inquiry starts on 26 October. The ED has been liaising with officers at Northants CC on the preparation of evidence to the inquiry, which will consider a range of key issues relevant to the implementation of LLW strategy.

Finally, member authorities are advised to book early for the **NuLeAF seminar on 'Planning and LLW management'**, which will be held in March 2011. This will provide opportunity to hear about and discuss the latest developments and their implications for local authority planning and development control. Registration details will be available within the next few weeks. Please check our website for details www.nuleaf.org.uk.

The Process for Siting a Geological Disposal Facility

As was widely reported, the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership postponed its meeting scheduled for 29 September. This was to enable discussions to be completed with Government about the funding for its work in the current financial year. The Government had been due to publish the results of a basic geological study of West Cumbria at the meeting. As the meeting had been postponed, DECC also decided to delay the publication of the study by the British Geological Survey (BGS). The discussions about funding have now been resolved, so the next meeting of the Partnership will take place on the 28 October. The results of the BGS study will be published at that meeting.

The Government is also revamping its **Geological Disposal Implementation Board (GDIB)** with the objective of providing ministerial oversight of the implementation programme as well as enabling local communities, CoRWM, key waste consignors and green NGO's to provide direct input to, or to have direct observation of, the programme. Government hopes that it will help build confidence in the programme among key stakeholders.

Submarine Dismantling Project

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has completed the first stage of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) statutory consultation on the Submarine Dismantling Project, which considered the overall approach and generic environmental criteria. The second stage is likely to put forward the MoD's proposed criteria for assessing sites and an indicative list of credible

sites for initial submarine dismantling (having taken the proposed criteria into account). The launch of the second stage will take place in the near future. The materials for the first stage of the SEA statutory consultation (and the second stage, upon release) can be viewed at www.submarinedismantling.co.uk.

The MoD intends to seek the views of key local stakeholders (including local authorities) on the proposed criteria before confirming credible sites for initial dismantling. It also intends, at the same time, to open discussions with these stakeholders on the approach to local public consultation.

The approach to developing an indicative list of credible sites for storage of the Intermediate Level Waste from dismantling is under discussion within Government.

The detailed assessment of options will be undertaken during the course of 2011 and the project will continue to engage with key local stakeholders on plans for public consultation and to provide briefings on progress. Formal and full public consultation is intended to start in the latter part of 2011.

Outcome of the NuLeAF AGM, 20 October

The main outcomes of the AGM were:

- the appointment of Councillor Tim Knowles from Cumbria County Council as Chair and the re-appointment of Councillor Neil Swannick from Manchester City Council as Vice-Chair;
- approval on an annual report;
- approval of a set of strategic objectives for 2011; and
- approval of a report on finances and funding.

The AGM agreed that subject to some minor amendments, the proposed strategic objectives (available on the NuLeAF website at [AGM item 4](#)) should be published as a Policy Statement.

It also agreed to hold the level of requested payments from contributing member authorities in 2011-12 to the current rates. Steps are also being taken to seek to maintain existing funding and to raise new income.

Dates for the Diary

8 December Radioactive Waste Planning Group (formerly the LLW Officer Working Group), London (12.30 – 3.30)

The dates for Steering Group meetings throughout 2011 will be circulated within the next few weeks.

Contact Points

All member authorities are asked to ensure that NuLeAF is kept informed of any changes to officer or councillor contacts. It is important that these are kept up-to-date, so that the right people receive e-bulletins, invitations to NuLeAF meetings and other information.

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.