

E-BULLETIN

July 2010,
Issue 19



Welcome to Issue 19 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

- Coalition Government policies relevant to nuclear legacy management
- the process for siting a Geological Disposal Facility
- radioactive waste management and new nuclear power stations
- developments in Low Level Waste Management
- the NDA strategy review
- the Submarine Dismantling Project
- appointment of Chair and Vice Chair at the AGM on 20 October and
- dates for the diary.

Coalition Government Policies relevant to Nuclear Legacy Management

The meeting of the NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) on 14 July considered a report that covered:

- Government policies on nuclear legacy management
- Government policies on wider issues relevant to nuclear legacy management
- the funding of nuclear legacy management
- the NDA's organisational effectiveness review
- potential implications for NuLeAF

Following discussion, the SG agreed to:

- 1 write to the NDA to ask for an update on (a) discussions with Government about funding for 2011 onwards and (b) what consideration is being given to the role of Parent Body Organisations in risk sharing and funding nuclear legacy management facilities;
- 2 convene a meeting of the Strategy Review Group in September to discuss organisational and funding issues; and
- 3 consider a report at the AGM on 20 October on the implications of cuts in public expenditure for NuLeAF.

The SG report is available on the NuLeAF website at [SG item 4 report](#).

The Process for Siting a Geological Disposal Facility

The SG considered a detailed update covering:

- developments in the work of the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Wastes Safely (MRWS) Partnership; and

- the Executive Director's input to the Partnership's work.

The most recent developments in the Partnership's work include:

- publication of the main outputs from the first stage of the Partnership's programme of public and stakeholder engagement (PSE1) and the Partnership's response;
- the decision to ask Government to proceed with the high-level geological screening of West Cumbria by the British Geological Survey (BGS); and
- agreement to a plan for a second period of PSE.

An overview of these developments is available in [SG item 5 report](#).

The SG agreed to welcome the approach being taken by the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership.

Radioactive Waste Management and New Nuclear Power Stations

An update on new build developments includes:

- **Re-Consultation on Energy National Policy Statements:** the Coalition Government has announced that it will be launching a re-consultation in the autumn on the draft energy National Policy Statements following the consultation undertaken by the previous administration, and in particular due to changes which have been made to the Appraisal of Sustainability for the Overarching Energy National Policy Statement. It is reported that the Government intends to ratify revised Statements by April 2011.
- **'New Nuclear' Local Authority Group:** This has been established following a fringe event on 7 July at the LGA Conference in Bournemouth. The event agreed the terms of reference for the group and identified common areas of interest for a draft work programme. NuLeAF will be liaising closely with the new group on issues associated with radioactive waste management and decommissioning.
- **Joint Working with Somerset Authorities:** EdF launched its second stage consultation on proposals for new nuclear build at Hinkley Point in early July. The NuLeAF Executive Director (ED) has indicated to Somerset officers that NuLeAF could assist with an analysis of EdF's proposals for decommissioning and radioactive waste management, taking into account current developments in strategies and their implementation, and with a view to identifying issues for further clarification, for comment, or for further work (for example in preparation for development of the Local Impact Report). It is anticipated that a meeting with Somerset/Sedgemoor officers will take place in late July or August.
- **Generic Design Assessment:** the Environment Agency has launched a consultation on its preliminary conclusions about acceptability of new build designs. These are that the Agency could issue interim statements of design acceptability for the EPR and AP1000 designs, subject to a number of potential GDA issues, including decommissioning and the disposability of spent fuel. The ED is discussing responses to the consultation with Somerset/Sedgemoor officers. Details about the consultation can be found at [EA GDA consultation](#). The closing date for submissions is 18 October.
- **Feasibility Studies on Spent Fuel Management:** following preliminary discussion with NDA, the ED has been in contact with the Nuclear Industry Association (NIA),

which commissioned the studies from NDA. The CEO of the NIA has agreed to make a presentation on the high-level findings of the studies at the new build seminar being organised by Somerset authorities on 20th September (for details and how to register contact Kim Rogers, personal.assistant@sedgemoor.gov.uk). Following the presentation further consideration can be given to the potential role of local authorities in decision making on preferred options, particularly for siting spent fuel storage or encapsulation facilities.

Developments in Low Level Waste (LLW) Management

The SG also received a series of updates on LLW management. National developments include:

- **LLW Strategy** - this is still with Government awaiting approval. At its April meeting, the SG agreed that a NuLeAF Briefing Paper should be published once the LLW Strategy is approved. A draft outline of the Briefing Paper was attached to the Progress Report to the 14 July SG meeting (at Annex 1 in [SG item 7 report](#)). This includes appendices on potential policies for Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks and on the circumstances under which planning permission for landfilling LLW would be required.
- **Evidence bases** – at the ED's request, NDA has initiated some work to provide a case study setting out regional radioactive waste arisings and management facilities. Despite the demise of Regional Strategies, there is still a clear need for work to be done on 'regional' evidence bases. This is in part because of the likelihood of the emergence of joint local authority arrangements to address 'across boundary' planning issues, but also because of the need in any case for much improved evidence bases for addressing radioactive waste in Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks at Waste Planning Authority level.

An update on local developments includes:

- **King's Cliffe landfill (Northamptonshire)** – as reported to the April SG, planning permission for LLW/VLLW disposal was refused by the planning authority on 16 March. Following an appeal by the operator (Augean), a public inquiry will be held (starting on 26 October). The decision has been called in by the Secretary of State, so may not be available until the spring of 2011. NuLeAF's LLW Officer Working Group has contributed to preliminary discussion about the grounds for upholding the refusal.
- **Clifton Marsh landfill (Lancashire)** - planning permission for the extension to the operating life of the site to 2015 has been granted (the application was for extension to 2020). The site will therefore continue to provide a disposal route for LLW/VLLW for only a limited period of time. This means that proposals to develop a disposal facility for LLW at the nearby Springfields licensed nuclear sites are likely to be pursued. A short case study on the Clifton Marsh decision has been published ([Case Study 10, June 2010](#)).

Note also that:

- the date for the proposed NuLeAF seminar on LLW and planning is under review. The intention is to hold the seminar at a time when (a) the NDA case study on evidence bases and (b) key development control case studies can be discussed; and

- the name and remit of the LLW Officer Working Group has been amended to reflect the need to consider a wider range of radioactive waste management developments and their planning implications. The name has been changed to 'Radioactive Waste Planning Group' (RWPG). The next meeting of the RWPG is on 8 September.

The NDA Strategy Review

The 14 July meeting of the SG considered a report which addressed the potential relevance of the Aarhus Convention to issues associated with the implementation of NDA Strategy 2. The report is available at [SG item 6 report](#).

The report expresses the view that potential initiatives described by NDA as 'strategic opportunities' – for example, alternative disposal routes for VLLW/LLW, consolidation of storage/treatment for ILW and near surface disposal of short-lived ILW/graphite - are unlikely to move beyond the aspirational level if NDA does not properly address how they might be implemented.

The NDA have acknowledged that implementation issues need to be addressed, but indicate that there is unlikely to be anything concrete about this in the new Strategy. Nonetheless, they add that "making it real is very much at the front of our mind and we will be taking steps to facilitate".

Formal consultation on the NDA's proposed Strategy is anticipated to start in early September and will be considered at the SG meeting on 20 October.

Following discussion at the 14 July meeting, the SG agreed to write to the NDA asking that it take account of the implications of the Aarhus Convention and associated EC or UK legislative requirements – particularly about public participation - in the way it develops its thinking on implementation of key aspects of strategy for managing radioactive wastes.

Submarine Dismantling Project

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has initiated the first stage of a statutory consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Submarine Dismantling Project. This is considering generic environmental criteria and the statutory consultation materials may be viewed at www.submarinedismantling.co.uk. The second stage of SEA statutory consultation will put forward an indicative list of "credible sites" (having taken environmental and other criteria into account).

MoD proposes to seek the views of certain local stakeholders (including local authorities for sites in the indicative list) on the proposed criteria before the list of credible sites is confirmed. It also intends, at the same time, to open discussions with these stakeholders on the approach to local public consultation.

National workshop(s) are expected to form a part of this pre-consultation engagement and MoD hopes to be able to confirm dates shortly after the next SDP Advisory Group on 27 July 10. It is expected that the workshop(s) will be held in October 2010.

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair at the AGM, 20 October

The SG's attention was drawn to the need to appoint a new Chair at the AGM as Councillor Holliday will have completed three years as Chair and so will be unable to stand again for that position.

The procedure for nominations and elections is as follows:

- a councillor from any contributing member authority may be nominated for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair;
- candidates may be nominated by any member authority, and should be seconded by another member authority;
- any nominations should be submitted in writing to reach the NuLeAF secretariat before 5.00pm on Monday 18 October 2010;
- if any position is contested, voting cards will be issued to the elected member delegates from each contributing member authority represented at the AGM;
- in the event of the need for an election, candidates (or their nominee) will be asked to make a 2 minute presentation to the AGM in support of their candidature;
- voting will be by secret ballot and each ballot will eliminate the candidate with the least votes; and
- the AGM's advice will be sought in the event of a tied vote.

Any members from contributing authorities that are interested in standing for Chair or Vice Chair should contact the secretariat.

Dates for the Diary

8 September	Radioactive Waste Planning Group (formerly the LLW Officer Working Group), London (12.30 – 3.30)
September	Strategy Review Group (date and venue TBC)
20 October	Steering Group and AGM, Local Government House, Smith Square, London (11.00-3.00)

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.