

E-BULLETIN

October 2011,
Issue 24



Welcome to Issue 24 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

- the review of the implications of the Fukushima accident for the UK
- spatial planning and radioactive waste management
- community benefits and radioactive waste management
- NDA Strategy for contracting, competition and supply chain development
- the Submarine Dismantling Project
- low level waste (LLW) seminar
- the process for siting a geological disposal facility
- the outcome of the NuLeAF AGM and
- dates for the diary.

Review of the Implications of the Fukushima Accident for the UK

At its meeting on 21 October the NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) received a presentation on the Weightman Report from Deputy Chief Inspector Dr Andy Hall from the Office for Nuclear Regulation. The presentation and a NuLeAF briefing to inform discussion are available on the NuLeAF website at [Fukushima presentation](#) (5Mb) and [Briefing on Weightman Report](#).

Discussion focused on questions of:

- the balance between openness and transparency on the one hand, and protecting sensitive information on the other
- the implications for local authority emergency preparedness of siting new nuclear power stations next to existing nuclear facilities
- the size and extendability of Detailed Emergency Planning Zones
- the implications of failing 'stress tests' (which could entail the need for improvements or plant closure)
- the case for moving from wet to dry storage of spent fuel, and
- the key lessons of the need for 'continuous improvement' and acting on the findings of Periodic Safety Reviews.

Future meetings of the SG will receive further reports on implementation of the recommendations from the Weightman Report, including on emergency preparedness for accidents at nuclear legacy facilities.

Spatial Planning and Radioactive Waste Management

The SG has endorsed publication of interim advice on approaches to addressing radioactive waste management in Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks (MWFs). The

interim advice takes account of developments in the Government's approach to spatial planning, NDA Strategy and the range of local planning policies being adopted or proposed by Waste Planning Authorities.

The interim advice and review of developments is set out in a report on the NuLeAF website at [SG 21 October item 4](#). A Briefing Paper based on the report and taking into account discussion at the SG will be published in early November.

The interim advice will be reviewed in the Spring, following consideration of LLWR's Ltd's 'capacity gap' analysis of LLW arisings and facilities, the NDA's forthcoming 'waste consolidation plan' and DCLG consultation on a revised version of PPS10 on planning for sustainable waste management.

Community Benefits and Radioactive Waste Management

The SG has endorsed a note setting out key points about a potential Radioactive Waste Community Benefits Protocol as a suitable basis for discussion with NDA. The note is appended to a report that provides an update on a range of developments related to potential community benefit protocols. The report is available at [SG 21 October item 6](#).

The purpose of a protocol would be to provide a flexible framework within which local authorities and communities can be engaged in discussion of the community benefits that might be agreed in association with a radioactive waste management facility with a regional or national role. The benefits arising from those discussions would be separate to those measures that are necessary to make a proposed development acceptable in planning terms. Hence, the short-hand phrase 'beyond S106' benefits is often used.

Note that the protocol is not intended to apply to benefit packages that might be associated with a Geological Disposal Facility, or to radioactive waste management facilities at new nuclear power stations that serve a single site. Potential community benefits associated with these developments are being addressed in separate discussions.

NDA Strategy for Contracting, Competition and Supply Chain Development

The SG has considered a report outlining the relevant aspects of NDA strategy, representations about the nature of contracts to be let by Sellafield Ltd and the outcome of an NDA workshop on Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) access to contracts. The report outlines concerns about the difficulties that SMEs face, with implications for local socio-economic impacts. The report is available at [SG 21 October item 7](#). The SG agreed to write to DECC, the NDA and the Chair of the Select Committee on Public Administration.

The Submarine Dismantling Project

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has announced that it will be starting a 16 week period of 'Submarine Dismantling Consultation' on 28 October (ending on 17 February). The feedback from the consultation will be used to inform three key decisions within the project:

- how radioactive material should be removed from laid-up nuclear submarines;
- where the radioactive waste should be removed; and
- which type of site should be used to store the resultant Intermediate Level Waste (ILW).

Based on its detailed assessment, MoD will be consulting on proposals relating to each of the three decisions.

MoD has already announced that the candidate sites for where the radioactive waste is removed are Devonport and Rosyth Dockyards, or a combination of the two. As a result, there will be a particular focus on consultation in the Plymouth and Rosyth areas, and in the neighbouring areas of Saltash, Torpoint and Edinburgh. Interim storage options have been identified in generic terms as types of site owned by MoD, industry or the NDA.

MoD is also organising two national workshops on 31 January (Birmingham) and 6 February (Glasgow). The workshops are intended for stakeholders who have a strategic or specialist interest in the project, for example, from local authorities, industry and statutory bodies. Member authorities interested in attending a workshop can register by e-mailing MoD at DESSMIS-SDP@mod.uk.

A report setting out draft comments on the MoD's proposals will be prepared for consideration at the SG meeting on 25 January.

Low Level Waste Seminar

Following the success of the seminar in March this year (see link to [Seminar Report](#)), the SG agreed to hold a follow-up seminar at Local Government House on 9 March 2012.

It is anticipated that the morning sessions will focus mainly on LLWR's 'capacity gap' analysis and its implications and the afternoon session on key planning issues. NDA and LLWR Ltd have agreed to contribute to the seminar.

Process for Siting a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF)

The West Cumbria MRWS Partnership is approaching the end of the assessment phase of its work programme and will consult in late 2011/early 2012 on its preliminary views on the issues that are relevant to a decision about participation in the next stage of the siting process for a GDF. Following consultation, these views will be reviewed prior to submitting a report to the principal local authorities, who are the local decision-making bodies in the process.

The Government has also published its first annual report to Parliament on implementing its GDF programme. This is available at [GDF Annual Report](#). The report is notable for reference to a Ministerial aspiration to accelerate the GDF programme so that first waste emplacement is able to take place in 2029, rather than the current assumption of 2040. The Government has asked NDA to look at "opportunities for optimising the process with the ambition to accelerate progress". Initial findings are to be presented to the meeting of the Geological Disposal Implementation Board on 6 December. The Partnership has registered concern with the Minister, highlighting the need to avoid a perception of being rushed (see [Letter to DECC regarding acceleration](#)).

Outcome of the AGM, 21 October

The main outcomes of the AGM were:

- the re-appointment of Councillor Tim Knowles from Cumbria County Council and Councillor Neil Swannick from Manchester City Council as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively;
- approval of an annual report;
- approval of a set of strategic objectives for 2012; and
- approval of a report on finances and funding.

The AGM agreed to hold the level of requested payments from contributing member authorities in 2012-13 to the current rates.

The AGM also agreed that the Executive Director should:

- produce an introductory briefing on radioactive waste management; and
- liaise with the New Nuclear Local Authorities Group about preparation of a statement clarifying the relationship between the two bodies.

The reports to the AGM are available on the NuLeAF website at [AGM reports](#).

Dates for the Diary

11 November	Engagement meeting with NDA, Magnox, RSRL and regulators, London
8 December	Radioactive Waste Planning Group, London
25 January	Steering Group, London
9 March	LLW Seminar, London

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.

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