

E-BULLETIN

May 2012,
Issue 26



Welcome to Issue 26 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

- appointment of NuLeAF Executive Co-Directors
- steps towards an improved approach to identifying VLLW and low activity LLW disposal routes
- NDA strategy development
- radioactive waste management and new nuclear power stations
- Government's national strategic framework on nuclear emergency planning
- planning advice for developments near licensed nuclear sites
- the process for siting a geological disposal facility and
- dates for the diary.

Appointment of NuLeAF Executive Co-Directors

NuLeAF has appointed Philip Matthews and Stewart Kemp as Executive Co-Directors. Philip and Stewart will work on a job-share basis, taking up the reins from Fred Barker who leaves NuLeAF in early June.

Philip is an energy and climate change specialist with CAG Consultants and was previously a Senior Policy Advisor and Acting Director of the Sustainable Development Commission in Scotland. Stewart is Nuclear Issues Manager with Cumbria County Council, with over 25 years experience of working on nuclear issues within local government.

Philip starts on 30 May, with Stewart joining him a few weeks later. The secretariat will circulate further details about hand-over arrangements in the coming weeks.

Steps Towards an Improved Approach to Identifying VLLW and Low Activity LLW Disposal Routes

NuLeAF is participating in a new NDA working group to develop an improved approach to identifying disposal routes for VLLW and low activity LLW (LALLW). The first meeting of the working group was on 20 April and the outcome was reported to the NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) on 25 April.

NDA's aim is to produce two documents to help inform the supply chain and Waste Planning Authorities (WPA): first, a strategic position on the use of disposal routes, other than disposal at the LLW Repository (LLWR) near Drigg in Cumbria; and second, a plan for implementation. The target date for delivery is the end of the calendar year.

Current tasks within the project include:

- preparation of a statement of future capacity against need;
- assessment of the potential for on-site and near-site VLLW/LALLW disposal options at Sellafield;
- assessment of the scope for on-site disposal at other NDA sites;
- developing a position on the impact of on-site disposal on ability to meet site end states;
- assessment of the potential for using VLLW in LLWR cap construction;
- reviewing work on the erosion of landfills in coastal environments; and
- reviewing the implications for guidance on Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks.

NuLeAF will be leading on the latter task, starting with review of its interim advice at its officer group meeting on 31 May.

The SG meeting on 25 April welcomed the NDA's commitment to develop an improved approach and endorsed participation in the NDA working group.

For other updates on LLW management, see the report on the NuLeAF website at [SG item 5](#).

NDA Strategy Development

The SG also considered a report on NDA strategy development, covering:

- Integrated Waste Management (IWM)
- Site Restoration
- the proposal for a Community Benefits Protocol; and
- future engagement meetings with NDA

Main points include:

- **IWM:** NuLeAF is participating in NDA's IWM Topic Overview Group (TOG). The meeting of the TOG on 22 March received an update on development of NDA's thinking. This included that 'local' consolidation of ILW storage, involving Magnox stations in England and their neighbouring sites, may offer potential (ie between A and B stations). NDA is entering into preliminary discussions with site owners to assess the potential for this sort of consolidation. Engagement with the relevant local authorities will follow. The TOG also heard that eight credible options for the application of thermal treatments to ILW are being assessed. This has included the trialling of various methods at Sellafield. Such treatments are most likely to be applicable to Sellafield waste streams, but could also provide a contingency for any Magnox ILW streams that are not suitable for storage or disposal in mini-stores. Identification of preferred options is not scheduled until March 2013.
- **Site Restoration:** The NDA has published a draft strategy development programme for site restoration for comment by 31 May. This is available on the NDA website at [Site restoration draft paper for comment](#). The draft programme outlines the NDA's current strategy for site restoration, and then describes the remaining strategic issues and NDA's proposals for resolving them. The issues include: the balance between in-situ and ex-situ management options; the forms of institutional controls appropriate to different next planned uses of a site; the tensions between continuous and deferred restoration; and the appropriateness of particular interim states. In order to address

these issues, the NDA refers to five key products: principles for defining site end states; an NDA perspective of options for future use of NDA land; principles for prioritising restoration projects; principles for defining 'interim states'; and regulator guidance on institutional controls that apply throughout site restoration. On options for next use of NDA land, a proposed schedule anticipates that NDA will move from draft to final versions on this between June and December this year. The ED has offered NuLeAF's assistance in facilitating discussion with local authorities. The SG agreed to write to the NDA to: welcome the proposed strategy development programme; highlight the importance of engagement with local authorities at appropriate points as the programme develops; and reiterate the offer of assistance to help facilitate that engagement.

- **Community Benefits Protocol:** The ED discussed the position with NDA in April. NDA is not able to progress discussions because it is still involved in high level 'pathfinder' discussions with Cumbrian local authorities about the approach that may be appropriate in relation to the large number of developments that are likely to affect the Sellafield site over the next five years, including significant transfers of wastes and materials from other sites. Issues under consideration include the legislative underpinning for any agreement that might be put in place, and the scale of the support that might be provided. NDA wish to reach conclusions on these matters before seeking to identify the most appropriate approach for other parts of England and Wales. They note, however, that the number of cases where other sites may be asked to manage radioactive wastes from more than one site, customer or sector is likely to be small. As such, NDA's preliminary view is that a bespoke approach may be most appropriate in each case, drawing on the lessons identified in the approach in West Cumbria, but without adopting a nationally agreed framework. In the light of this, the SG agreed to review potential approaches – including the case for a national framework - when agreement has been reached in West Cumbria and further information is available about the implications of current discussions about ways of securing LLW disposal routes and ILW treatment and storage consolidation. The SG could also take account of any developments relating to a potential benefits protocol associated with new nuclear power stations.
- **Engagement meetings with NDA:** The NDA has suggested that further meetings be organised with Magnox, RSRL, regulators and local authorities in September 2012 and March 2013, to enable discussion to take place on key issues in NDA strategy development and implementation. NDA will be writing shortly to suggest key topics for discussion at these meetings. The ED has suggested that site restoration would be an appropriate topic for a meeting in September. The SG agreed that the engagement meetings between NDA, Site Licensee Companies and local authorities be organised as appropriate.

The full report can be found at [SG item 6](#).

Radioactive Waste Management and New Nuclear Power Stations

A detailed report was tabled at the SG meeting, covering:

- discussion about new build at the NuLeAF seminar on 9 March;
- input to Somerset County Council regarding issues associated with the management of radioactive waste and spent fuel at the proposed Hinkley Point C station;

- the procedure and timetable for the National Infrastructure Directorate's (NID) consideration of the application; and
- issues raised about spent fuel and radioactive waste management in representations to the NID.

After discussion, the SG agreed to keep developments under review and provide advice and assistance to Somerset CC, Sedgemoor DC and West Somerset DC as appropriate.

The full report can be found on the NuLeAF website at [SG item 7](#).

National Strategic Framework on Nuclear Emergency Planning

Following review of the implications of the Fukushima accident, the Government has established a 'national strategy framework for nuclear emergency planning and response'.

DECC has informed NuLeAF that:

- The National Strategic Framework (NSF) provides: an umbrella that covers all UK nuclear emergency planning & response: civil and military, facilities and transport, local, national and international; a mechanism for cross-community collaboration to strengthen the system by identifying gaps and addressing them effectively; strong strategic direction, improved involvement by Ministers and government; a mechanism for ensuring that industry experts' advice is heard and implemented.
- The NSF covers the response to any nuclear emergency, whether caused by accident or sabotage.
- The NSF is addressing 6 blocks of work: strategic coordination; risk assessment; emergency plans; emergency response; recovery; and communications.
- DECC has undertaken 'capability mapping', 'base-lining', 'gap analysis' and prioritisation across the 6 blocks, and is now moving forward with delivery.

When asked for further detail, DECC replied that: "Our gap analysis is correlated with the Weightman report findings. Our programme will be focused on the recommendations made there on emergency planning e.g. national emergency response arrangements. The work to scope this programme alongside Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group partners is ongoing with the findings captured in ONR's one year on progress report in the autumn, with a status report due in June."

Planning Advice for Developments near Licensed Nuclear Sites

Members reported at the January SG meeting that several local authorities had been contacted by ONR (an agency of the HSE) to discuss planning advice around nuclear sites. It was agreed that members would provide feedback so that key points could be circulated.

Subsequent to the meeting, feedback was received from a number of authorities. Key points are:

- HSE provides land use planning advice to local authorities called 'Planning Advice for Developments near Hazardous Installations' (PADHI). The overall objective is to ensure that the element of residual risk arising at a site is taken into account in planning decisions. Residual risk is defined by HSE as the irreducible minimum level of risk which remains after all legally required preventative measures have been taken at

the major hazard site. In the short term, HSE expects significant developments for public occupation near to major hazards to be inhibited to avoid undesirable increases in numbers at risk. In the longer term, it says that some reduction in the numbers at risk may be possible through the medium of strategic land use planning. HSE have developed a methodology which is codified within a software package that can be used on-line to obtain advice on planning applications and pre-planning enquiries (see the HSE website at [HSE: Land use planning - PADHI – HSE’s current methodology](#)).

- For nuclear licensed sites, ONR has been meeting with local authorities to discuss the need to reference ‘Nuclear Safeguarding Zones’ (NSZs) in Local Development Frameworks. These zones specify the areas within which particular types of proposed developments should be referred to HSE/ONR for advice on their appropriateness (or otherwise). The ONR’s approach is explained on the HSE website at [HSE: Land use planning - PADHI+ Nuclear installations](#).
- For Sellafield, for example, ONR have advised Copeland BC that the following zones should be flagged in their Core Strategy:
 - Inner Zone (0-6km): any development leading to an increase in residential accommodation, or likely to cause an influx of non-residential population; and
 - Outer Zone (6-10km): development providing residential accommodation, permanent or temporary, for more than 50 people or likely to cause an influx of non-residential population exceeding 50 people.
- ONR also advises that local authority Emergency Planning Officers should be consulted to ensure that any proposed developments can be accommodated in Off-Site Nuclear Emergency Plans.

Feedback has also included the comment that ONR need to be more open about the basis for their advice on the size of NSZs, and for any subsequent advice on specific proposed developments.

The Process for Siting a Geological Disposal Facility

West Cumbria MRWS Partnership

The West Cumbria MRWS Partnership’s formal public consultation to consider whether West Cumbria should take part in the search for a site for a repository for the UK’s higher activity radioactive waste came to a close on 23 March. An opinion survey is also being conducted to test public opinion in a statistically representative way. The results will be considered alongside the results of this consultation. Details on the consultation can be found on the Partnership website at [Consultation - West Cumbria MRWS Partnership](#).

The Partnership will use responses to consider whether it should change its initial opinions and, if so, how. This will shape the advice the Partnership gives to Allerdale BC, Copeland BC and Cumbria CC, to help inform their decision about whether to take part in the search for a site for a repository or not.

The steps in completion of the Partnership’s work include:

16 and 26 April	Workshops to consider the consultation findings
22 May	Partnership meeting to discuss a draft final report
25 June	Partnership meeting to adopt final report

Expression of Interest Process Still Open

It is still open for other areas to express an interest in potential participation in the GDF siting process on a without commitment basis.

DECC highlights the benefits that siting a GDF could bring to an area:

- inherent benefits from hosting a large-scale, long-term engineering project (averaging over 550 jobs a year, and 1000 during the construction phase);
- inward investment mitigation of impacts (which could include transport and infrastructure); and
- an additional community benefits package.

Dates for the Diary

31 May	Radioactive Waste Planning Officer Group, Local Government House, London, 12.30 – 15.30
20 July	Steering Group Meeting, Local Government House, London, 11.00 – 15.00

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.