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| Meeting: | NuLeAF Steering Group, 27 June 2007 |
| Agenda Item: | 11 |
| Subject: | Progress Report |
| Author: | Fred Barker |
| Purpose: | To provide an outline of progress in other areas of NuLeAF activity |

Introduction

This report provides an outline of progress on:

- the NDA review of site end states;
- the NDA review of its stakeholder engagement arrangements;
- the National Audit Office study of NDA management and operation contracts;
- discussion with British Energy;
- COWAM in Practice;
- the ISOLUS programme;
- the preparation of regulatory guidance on the management of radioactive wastes on licensed nuclear sites;
- the Trust Fund application; and
- NuLeAF finances.

1 NDA Review of Site End States (SES)

Following local consultation to identify the preferred end states of NDA sites, the review has reached the 'reconciliation stage' where local recommendations are being reviewed against national policy developments.

The 'reconciliation' discussions are taking place in meetings as follows:

18 June: Covering Capenhurst, Springfields, Harwell and Winfrith
26 June: Covering Magnox stations in England and Wales
2 July: Covering West Cumbria sites - Sellafield, Calder Hall and the LLWR

The Executive Director (ED) has accepted an invitation to participate in these meetings.

The format for the meetings is – for each site - to discuss 'mapping review issues' to identify any differences between the existing NDA assumed SES and the SSG recommended preferred SES. At the end of the process for each site, the meeting reaches a view on what SES should be confirmed. The recommendations from the meetings will go to the NDA Board in September, for review and inclusion in the NDA's revised national strategy, which is to be consulted on in Spring 08. In the meantime NDA is organising feedback workshops with representatives from SSGs on a regional basis. Feedback to member authorities will be provided at the same time (July/Aug).

To help inform the process, the Project Officer has prepared an overview of local authority views. For each NDA site, this summarises:

- (i) the recommendations made to the NDA on end uses/states;
- (ii) the nature of the LA input to the review process;
- (iii) where applicable, the key issues raised by LAs on (a) the SES review process (b) the content of SES proposals;
- (iv) whether, and if so how, LDF/MWDF plans have been taken into account, and whether there are any statements about consistency or otherwise of recommendations with those plans; and
- (v) any implications identified for decom strategy, LLW management or new new build.

This overview is currently in draft form and will be finalised following the 'reconciliation' meetings. The overview will then be used to inform preparation of a NuLeAF Briefing Paper on the SES review.

2 NDA Review of Stakeholder Engagement Arrangements

The NDA is overseeing a two-stage review of its stakeholder engagement arrangements. The first stage has focussed primarily on national arrangements and the second stage will focus on local arrangements.

The ED has submitted comments on the first stage review recommendations, which were subject to a short period of web-based consultation in late May/early June (see Annex 1).

These comments were informed by previous feedback from member authorities and views expressed during previous SG discussions of NDA engagement arrangements.

The NDA's stakeholder engagement Convenor is attending the SG meeting to make a presentation on the results of the first stage review and to discuss questions for the second stage of the review.

At its last meeting, the SG agreed that a meeting of member authorities concerned about the effectiveness of local engagement should be convened in liaison with the NDA and its engagement Convenor. The timing and format of this meeting can be discussed with the Convenor at the SG meeting.

3 The National Audit Office Study of NDA Management and Operation Contracts

The NAO has contacted NuLeAF to invite it to submit evidence to its study on the value for money of the NDA's management and operations contracts with site licence companies. The deadline for submission of evidence is early July.

Member authorities with NDA sites have been invited to provide comments to NuLeAF to inform a submission to the NAO.

It is proposed that the submission highlight the need for the NDA to provide an effective framework for stakeholder engagement, so that stakeholder views are able to appropriately influence NDA strategy and delivery of M&O contracts.

4 Discussion with British Energy

The ED met with representatives from British Energy on 19 June to brief the company on NuLeAF activities and discuss the company's approach to radioactive waste management, decommissioning and stakeholder engagement.

The key points from discussion were:

- BE wishes to develop effective engagement with local stakeholders around its sites. It is reviewing options and may make a contribution to the NDA's review of local stakeholder engagement arrangements.
- BE considers that there should be an early review of the need for a new national LLW facility and its relationship to the siting of a geological repository.
- BE has developed decommissioning plans and end state positions for each of its sites. The end states are based on the removal of radioactive wastes and the de-licensing of sites. BE is considering production of a public domain version of its plans, with a view to future stakeholder engagement.
- BE will consider the possibility of participation in a NuLeAF convened briefing meeting for local authorities with BE sites.

5 COWAM in Practice (CIP)

The first meeting of the UK CIP Stakeholder Group is taking place on 19 July. The meeting will identify participant views on what the key governance issues are in radioactive waste management in the UK and how they should be addressed within the CIP project. The outcome of discussion at the meeting will be reported to the SG in October.

6 ISOLUS

The last meeting of the SG received a report on the Ministry of Defence ISOLUS Steering Group (MISG) and the planned setting up of an Independent Advisory Group (IAG). NuLeAF is a formal member of the MISG.

Following meetings in May, agreement has been reached about the setting up of the IAG. The chair is to be Les Netherton, until recently Head of Environment at Plymouth City Council, and, following reorganisation, an independent consultant. The first meeting of the IAG will be held in Manchester on 4 July.

At the most recent meeting of the MISG, updates were given by the industry, on CoRWM, the LLW Review, and NDA. Plans for a further period of consultation have not yet been developed. There are a number of technical studies in hand – including identifying the non-nuclear hazardous material with the submarine hulls. The study reports will be published on the ISOLUS website.

7 Comments on Draft Regulatory Guidance on the Management of Radioactive Wastes on Licensed Nuclear Sites

As agreed at the April meeting of the SG, comments were prepared on the draft regulatory guidance on the management of radioactive wastes on licensed nuclear sites. The comments are attached as Annex 2.

8 Trust Fund Application

The SG meeting in April agreed that a draft application to an appropriate Trust Fund should be drawn up. In the light of developments in LLW management, it was proposed in item 7 above that:

an application be made for Trust funding to enable NuLeAF to commission and disseminate research to identify and address local authority and local community views about local approaches to LLW management, so that approaches can be implemented that can inspire public confidence.

The draft application will be prepared in the light of SG discussion under item 7.

It is anticipated that the research would seek to identify and address views and concerns about the application of the waste hierarchy, including:

- approaches to volume reduction and decontamination;
- the potential for re-use and recycling;
- use of incineration;
- disposal to near surface engineered vaults;

- disposal of contaminated land in-situ;
- disposal to landfill; and
- the potential application of concepts of partnership and community benefits to siting new LLW disposal facilities.

It is intended that the research would be undertaken in liaison with the local authorities that current host LLW management facilities, that are in the process of considering applications for facilities, or that are likely to face applications for such facilities in the foreseeable future. The scope of liaison will need to embrace different aspects of the waste hierarchy, including but not confined to disposal on existing nuclear sites.

This project would provide NuLeAF with a research basis from which to develop advice and guidance to member authorities, and input to the development and implementation of NDA strategy for LLW management. It is anticipated that the proposal will include a national conference to contribute to dissemination of the research findings.

It is anticipated that an application for funding will be made by early September, with project commencement in early 2008.

9 NuLeAF Funding

Further to the decisions of the SG at its April meeting, the Executive Director has undertaken the following to secure income for the current financial year:

- On 18 May, a letter was sent to the NDA requesting a contribution of £70,000, which would reflect the growing value of NuLeAF's work and its activities on the full range of nuclear legacy management issues that now fall within the NDA's responsibilities.
- Also on 18 May, an e-mail was sent to DEFRA requesting a contribution of £70,000 to reflect the value of NuLeAF's input on the MRWS process.
- On 7 June, letters were sent to (a) corresponding member authorities and (b) non-members authorities highlighting the value of NuLeAF work and inviting them to become contributing member authorities.

A verbal update on progress will be provided at the SG meeting.