

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 29 January 2008
Agenda Item:	10
Subject:	Progress Report
Author:	Fred Barker
Purpose:	To provide an outline of progress in other areas of NuLeAF activity

Introduction

This report provides an update on:

- Organisational developments
- International projects
- ISOLUS

Updates

1 Organisational Developments

Staffing

The AGM in October agreed:

- that the PA post be advertised early in the New Year
- in principle that it wishes to continue to secure the services of an Executive Director on a further two year contract from June 08, and to ask the "employing authority" (Suffolk County Council), in liaison with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to consider whether to offer a contract extension to the current Executive Director

Arrangements have subsequently been made to progress the recruitment of a PA. The closing date for applications is 12 February and interviews will be on 3 March. It is intended that the new PA will have a short period of overlap with Christine del Corral to ensure an effective hand-over of work.

The Chair, Vice-Chair and employing authority have agreed that Fred Barker should be offered a two year contract extension, in effect from June 2008. The necessary steps are now being taken to formalise the offer.

Liability for Redundancy Payments

Members will also recall that the question was raised at the AGM of who has liability for meeting redundancy payments should NuLeAF not be able to continue to fund the PA and ED posts.

This issue has been considered by the employing authority which advises that:

- in such circumstances the period of notice for termination as specified in staff contracts would apply,
- the liability for meeting redundancy payments should rest with NuLeAF and
- that appropriate provision should be made within the NuLeAF budget.

The employing authority also advises that once the ED is contracted for a second two year period, a liability to provide a redundancy payment would also arise if NuLeAF were not in a financial position to offer further contract extension beyond June 2010.

The implications for the NuLeAF budget, including the potential scale of redundancy payments that would be payable in different circumstances, are currently under review. A full report will be provided to the meeting of the SG in April.

Audit and Budget

The AGM also agreed that NuLeAF's accounts be audited by Suffolk County Council on an annual basis. It is hoped to undertake this audit in early April so that the outcome can be reported to the SG meeting on 30 April.

A preliminary review indicates that expenditure for the current financial year is likely to be lower than projected at the time of the AGM, and income will be higher, leaving reserves to be carried forward of approximately £63,000 (compared to £50,000 as estimated at the time of the AGM).

A detailed update on the NuLeAF budget will be provided as part of the report to the April meeting.

LGA Updates

Following the attendance of an LGA Environment Board member at one of the regional seminars, it was agreed to provide the Board with an update on NuLeAF activities, and offer of a meeting between the Chair and Deputy and Board portfolio holders. The update is available at: http://www.nuleaf.org.uk/nuleaf/documents/2008-01-02_NuLeAF_Update.pdf.

2 International Projects

COWAM in Practice (CIP)

The second meeting of the UK CIP stakeholder group is taking place on 5 February. The meeting will review progress in the project, including a report from researchers on preliminary work undertaken on the governance issues identified as priorities by the first meeting. Opportunity will also be provided for the group to input to further development of the project. The main outputs of the meeting will be reported to the April SG.

Forum on Stakeholder Confidence

The ED attended a two day workshop in Paris before Xmas, which discussed the future work programme of the NEA's Forum on Stakeholder Confidence. The ED was asked to make a

short presentation from the perspective of a UK stakeholder. A note of the presentation is attached as an annex to this report.

CARL

As discussed at the 'final' CARL workshop in Sweden last year, proposals are being developed for a potential UK research element of a future CARL programme. The development of proposals is being led by the NDA which is going out to tender for the UK research element.

PAMINA

The Final Report from the PAMINA workshop in Manchester in October last year is now available via the public PAMINA Project website. This forms PAMINA Deliverable 2.1.B.1 to the European Commission. The direct download link is: <http://www.ip-pamina.eu/downloads/paminad2.1.b.1.pdf>.

3 ISOLUS

Project ISOLUS was set up in 2000 to determine the means of managing radioactive wastes and other material from laid up nuclear submarines. Following the Government response to CoRWM's recommendations, the project is beginning to develop its siting strategy for the processing of waste from submarines and the interim storage of the arising ILW. These activities will not necessarily take place at the same site. In parallel, the project is considering the programme of technical and environmental studies that will inform future decision-making.

The project is overseen by the MoD ISOLUS Steering Group (MISG), of which NuLeAF is a member. The project is advised by an Advisory Group (IAG) made up of a wide range of stakeholders.

The most recent of the MISG was on 8 November 07, with Robin Carton from Plymouth City Council attending on behalf of NuLeAF. The meeting considered a range of project and industry updates. It was noted, for example, that the MoD is currently drafting an intergovernmental agreement with the NDA to enable a joint assessment of options for the interim storage of ILW.

The next meeting of the MISG is on 7 May.

Annex: Presentation to the NEA Forum for Stakeholder Confidence Workshop

Fred Barker, 13 December 07

This note outlines issues that it may be appropriate to address in the Forum for Stakeholder Confidence future work programme.

Theme 1: RD&D and stakeholder confidence

What is good practice in communicating the significance of uncertainties in repository safety case development?

The emphasis here is on the word ‘significance’. It is important to understand the significance of uncertainties for potential impact on the environment and human health, and on the timescales over which these impacts might be felt. Generating an understanding of the significance of uncertainties is important to generating stakeholder confidence.

What learning exists about how to generate a better alignment of stakeholder expectations about retrievability, with what is considered technically feasible and desirable?

In the UK, some stakeholders aspire to a form of retrievability that amounts to indefinite underground storage, rather than geological disposal. Are there any case studies of significant changes to local stakeholder aspirations as a siting process proceeds, and what brings these changes about?

Theme 2: Evolving cultural and organisational change

What is good practice for ways of systematically addressing the outputs of public and stakeholder engagement in decision-making at Board or senior level within organisations?

In CoRWM a lot of effort was put into analysing PSE findings and into reporting the findings to committee meetings so that they could inform a staged decision-making process. Doing this presents analytical and programming challenges. Are there case studies that identify good practice in the way that decision-makers organise their meetings so that PSE findings can directly inform their decision-making?

Theme 3: Information and communication

What learning exists about the scope, level of detail of information, and forms of communication that should accompany an invitation to local communities to participate in a siting process, and that might be required during subsequent negotiations?

This is a very topical issue in the UK, where NuLeAF is working with the Government and NDA to produce information materials for use at the launch of the siting process in the middle of next year.

Theme 4: Tools and processes for engagement

What good practices exist in provision of ‘national engagement plans’ that set out all forthcoming engagement on radioactive waste management issues, thereby enabling stakeholders to understand (a) the relationship of the engagement to decision-making; (b) the objectives of the engagement; (c) the timetable for engagement; (d) how the engagement links to other levels of engagement?

In the UK, stakeholders face a bewildering array of engagement opportunities. To its credit, the NDA has started to develop an ‘engagement plan’, but it is pretty rudimentary, for example, it does not cover engagement initiated by Government or Site Licensee Companies. Are there international

examples of ‘national engagement plans’ and, if so, how are they assembled, how are they kept up-to-date and how are they made available to stakeholders?

Theme 5: Increasing the value of radwaste facilities

In what ways should benefits packages be provided to build upon and supplement efforts to increase the cultural and amenity value of radwaste facilities?

In the UK, the key word in current discussions is “additionality”. Communities that may be interested in participating in a siting process take the view that a package should be (a) additional to maximising cultural and amenity value of the facility and (b) additional to current socio-economic initiatives or support measures. ‘Additional’ packages are seen as essential to incentivise participation and to compensate for actual and perceived impacts.