

NULEAF LOW LEVEL WASTE OFFICER WORKING GROUP

Note of the meeting held on 24 June, 2008 at LGA House

Present:

Fred Barker	NuLeAF
David Davies	Copeland BC
Peter Day	Oxfordshire CC
Catherine Draper	NuLeAF
Richard Evans	Cumbria CC
David Palk	Suffolk CC
Kerry Rickards	Sedgemoor DC
Susan Tipping	Kent CC
Mark Woodger	Essex CC
Derek Greedy	NNI Programme Board and West Midlands RTAB
Katherine Mondon	Secretary to the NNI Programme Board
Rob Murfin	NNI Programme Board and Yorkshire and Humberside RTAB

1 Note of the meeting on 28 April, 2008

The note of the Meeting held on 28 April, 2008 was agreed as an accurate record and would be placed on the NuLeAF website.

Action: CD

Action points arising:

- FB had submitted a letter to the NDA regarding 'Topical Strategies for LLW Management' based on comments at the meeting.
- Dates for future meetings. 18 September was confirmed. Alternate dates for the November meeting would be canvassed so that it would follow the hearings on Cumbria's MWDF.

Action: CD

2 Update on developments at specific sites

Dounreay – SEPA has indicated that an application for a LLW disposal facility at a location close to the Dounreay site can now proceed.

Hinkley Point – application for LLW disposal facility is on hold, pending clarification of business case and LLW Strategy. KR reported that Energy Solutions are exploring ways of securing approval to proceed from NDA.

LLWR near Drigg – RE reported that the contract for vault 9 would be announced on 30 June with construction starting at the end of July. The relevant parties are close to agreement on delivery mechanism for the Community Fund (a partnering arrangement between NDA, Cumbria CC and Copeland BC).

Sizewell – DP reported that SCC would be participating in an optioneering exercise on disposal of VLLW from Sizewell A, including on and off site options. He added that BE is planning to apply under the Electricity Act for a new store for spent fuel from Sizewell B. Concern was expressed by members of the working group that the application should be made under the TCPA to ensure proper public scrutiny of the application.

Springfields – a contingency plan has been developed for an on-site VLLW disposal facility in case permission for landfill extension (Clifton Marsh) is not granted.

FB suggested that NuLeAF should prepare case studies re the development of LLW facilities at specific sites for publication on the NuLeAF website. This was endorsed by the group.

Action: FB/CD

3 Community Benefits

Following discussion at the Officer WG about promoting a framework for community benefits, FB and KR met with NDA officials on 9 May to discuss the proposals. The initial view from NDA is that it would not be appropriate or possible to develop a framework which anticipated the provision of community funds for all types of radwaste facility. The meeting had discussed the possibility of a selective approach, based on the provision of community funds for radwaste management facilities that: are a departure from Business As Usual; fulfil a clear strategic need; and secure significant cost savings. A further meeting with NDA is being arranged to explore the scope for developing a joint approach, prior to a meeting with Government which is likely to take place in early August.

Action: FB

4 Report from NDA LLW Strategy Group (LSG) meeting, 19/20 June

FB reported on the main points from the meeting of the LSG on 19/20 June:

- NDA is updating the LLW 'baseline' (inventory of wastes and management facilities).
- NDA is reviewing bids for contracts which will assess the scope for greater use of metal recycling, incineration and VLLW disposal to landfill. A summary of findings will be reported to a future meeting of the LSG.
- NDA is reviewing the feedback on the topical strategies and will bring a draft Strategic Review document to the August meeting on the LSG.
- NDA is preparing a scoping report for a SEA related to the development of LLW strategy. The scoping report will be issued for comment over the summer.
- NDA will examine the best way of capturing and promoting good practices
- There is widespread recognition within the LSG that stakeholder confidence issues are critical to strategy implementation (and that proposals for new facilities are likely to lead to requests for associated community funds).
- NDA will review suggestions for establishing LSG sub-groups eg on stakeholder confidence and linkage to the commercial waste industry.

FB distributed a draft programme of LSG meetings. The group is meeting on 14/15 August, 13/14 November and 26/27 February. He highlighted that the Officer WG would be able to review the draft Strategic Review document at its meeting on 18 September. KR queried whether NDA would give the green light for applications for local facilities prior to completion of the strategy review in Feb 09. FB suggested that it might, given that the 'direction of travel' of NDA LLW strategy is well established.

DD raised the issue of Copeland BC's request for membership of the LSG. FB indicated that the draft terms of reference of the group state that the LSG would consider adding members upon receipt of a written application supported by at least one other member.

5 Environment Agency consultation on Guidance on Requirements for Authorisation

FB reported that two draft guidance documents are available for comment, with a deadline of 1 September ([EA Draft Guidance](#)). The first relates to Geological Disposal Facilities and the second to Near-Surface Disposal Facilities. The guidance sets out how the Environment Agencies propose to regulate disposal of radioactive wastes to such facilities. A set of preliminary comments will be considered at the NuLeAF Steering Group meeting on 7 July. It was also pointed out that the Environment Agencies have organised workshops to discuss the drafts (3 July Edinburgh on NSDF and 10 July Manchester on GDF).

6 Possibility of proposals for at site disposal of short-lived Intermediate Level Waste (ILW)

FB reported that current UK baseline strategy is to manage all ILW in purpose built stores at the sites where it arises, followed by consignment to the planned Geological Disposal Facility. Energy Solutions notes that near surface disposal of short-lived ILW is safely undertaken in other countries, avoiding the need to consign the wastes to geological disposal. Energy Solutions are making a presentation to the NuLeAF Steering Group on 7 July that will cover this and other proposals related to legacy management at Magnox sites.

7 Article in Waste Planning

An article highlighting that all waste planning authorities should address radwaste management in their MWDFs was published in early June.

8 Presentation on development of a UK strategy for non-nuclear industry (NNI) radioactive waste

KM, RM and DG provided an update on the work of the NNI programme board. Key points included:

- There is a need for recognition that NNI wastes arise across the whole of the UK, that the practices generating the NNI wastes provide important societal benefits, and that the volumes of wastes and the radiological risks involved are very small.

- Current practice is for the bulk of NNI VLLW and LLW to be disposed of to landfill and via incineration, along with Municipal, Commercial and Industrial (MCI) wastes. In the consultation leading to the new LLW policy, the NNI has reported a growing trend towards fewer facilities that will take these wastes. The proximity principle and the desire to reduce unnecessary transport formed the basis for Government wanting to develop a waste strategy for NNI wastes.
- Data collection from the NNI is underway, that will form the basis for the strategy. Additionally, a scoping study for sustainability assessment of the main strategy options has just been started. The assessment should provide a robust framework for evidence to the planning process.
- The strategy is likely to include some policy advice to planners, with an emphasis on the regional level.
- The first priority is to optimise the use of what's used now, and planned for MCI wastes, but to minimise the transport of wastes. The potential use of new NDA facilities was likely to be a secondary consideration, mainly because such facilities will not be available for some considerable time.
- The Board has commissioned some work from HPA to enable the risks of LLW to be communicated clearly.
- The intended timeline for development of the NNI waste strategy is similar to that of the NDA's LLW strategy.

The following points were made during discussion:

- RE queried the figures for volumes of NNI LLW. Based on authorisations to dispose to the LLWR, he thought the volumes are likely to be higher.
- RE asked what would be the vehicle for the NNI strategy, and asked about its status wrt planning strategy development. It was noted in response that PPS10 mentions that regional planning bodies should take account of "any waste management requirement identified nationally...". The NNI strategy is therefore expected to have similar weight to the National Waste Strategy 2007 and would therefore be a material consideration in planning matters.
- KR asked what consideration was being given to community benefits. He suggested that the principle should apply regardless of the source of the wastes. KM highlighted that benefits arise from the practices that create the NNI waste.
- FB highlighted the importance of continued liaison on the planning aspects, to ensure a consistent approach between the NDA and NNI LLW strategies.
- FB suggested that there would be value in looking at the 'how' of good practices in risk communication, in addition to the 'what'. KM suggested it might be appropriate to pursue this with NDA.

FB thanked KM, DG and RM for their presentation and hoped that liaison would continue.