

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 20 th July 2012
Agenda item:	8
Subject:	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Strategy development and related issues
Author:	Phil Matthews
Purpose:	To update the Steering Group on progress with the NDA Integrated Waste Management Strategy and other engagement

Introduction

This report covers:

- An update on the NDA Integrated Waste Management Strategy
- An update on the Radioactive Waste Inventory
- Progress with the September engagement meeting with NDA, Magnox and RSRL

Recommendation

That the Steering Group notes these updates and ensures NuLeAF continues to engage effectively with NDA on behalf of local authority interests.

Contribution to Strategic Objectives

That NuLeAF:

2. Encourages NDA and SLCs to engage early and effectively with the relevant local authorities when considering options for centralised and multi-site approaches, and to only move forward with such approaches where they are supported by the affected local authorities in the light of the overall balance of benefits and disadvantages
3. Seek to ensure that proposals for new projects that may be simpler, faster or cheaper than current practices can be convincingly demonstrated to be the best practicable, taking into account a full range of life cycle, safety, environmental and socio-economic factors, and stakeholder views.
20. Encourage member authorities with licensed nuclear sites to ensure that effective engagement arrangements with SLCs and NDA are in place, either through the SSG or direct engagement.

1. Integrated Waste Management (IWM) Strategy Update

A meeting of the Integrated Waste Management Topic Overview Group (IWM TOG) was held on the 12th July. The meeting covered:

- Credible options for integrated waste processing and an update on the IWM programme
- Updates on Higher Activity Wastes and Graphite treatment/storage
- A discussion on alternative routes for Lower Activity Low Level Waste (LALLW)
- A discussion on robust self-shielded containers
- A presentation on storage options in central and southern Scotland

The aim of the new Integrated Waste Strategy is to provide a concise and simplified strategic overview of radioactive waste management. The strategy will consider integration by (a) sites or SLCs and also (b) by waste stream.

The new strategy and the consideration of credible options for integrated waste processing will draw on the 2013 Radioactive Waste Inventory (see below). Options under consideration for processing included: processing on site, centralisation of facilities, or the use of mobile facilities.

Both the strategy and the assessment of processing options will be focussed on the NDA estate in the first instance, but it was hoped to draw in consideration of other waste streams. Particular challenges such as wastes requiring additional treatment (also known as 'Orphan Wastes') would be looked at.

On Higher Activity Wastes (HAW), the aim is to develop a strategic outline for options on HAW based on greater clarity on the current baseline, an assessment on what the situation is likely to be in 2023 and beyond, and an appraisal of the potential for new and alternative treatments for such wastes. A strategic case on HAW will be prepared and engagement on this will be undertaken in early 2013.

On Lower Activity Low Level Wastes (LALLW) a working group has been established on which NuLeAF and Cumbria County Council sit. There is an acceptance that progress with this group has been slow (see also LLW paper) but it is hoped that this can now be reinvigorated, particularly given the variety of issues around the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) and individual landfill site applications across the county.

Those present stressed the need for community engagement to be better addressed in future and for a strategic approach to be taken to the issues around LLW, as opposed to the piecemeal approach at present. As a first step it was agreed that NuLeAF would notify NDA or relevant local planning consultations. NuLeAF will discuss this issue with NDA in more detail in the near future.

2. Radioactive Waste Inventory (RWI) Update

A meeting on the RWI was held on the 3rd July, hosted by NDA.

A 2013 UK Radioactive Waste Inventory (UKRWI) inventory is required for a number of reasons including international reporting requirements. As the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MWRS) process develops an up to date inventory will also be vital to decisions taken on storage and disposal.

The 2013 inventory will be a 'full update' covering volumes and the physical and chemical characteristics of waste, and will also seek to eliminate data gaps and inconsistencies in the current information. The technical specification will be finalised and a contractor appointed by September 2012 and waste stream data will be gathered between January and May 2013.

3. September engagement meeting with NDA, Magnox and RSRL

Discussions have been on-going between NDA and NuLeAF regarding plans for an engagement meeting.

A programme and a date for the meeting - the 25th September – was agreed, with the engagement meeting to be held in the morning followed by the RWPG meeting.

However, it has now become apparent that the NDA staff who would have led the waste discussions will not now be able to attend. NuLeAF has proposed that the meeting on the 25th still goes ahead, with the waste session being held as a separate discussion following on from the Steering Group meeting on the 24th October. It is hoped that NDA will confirm this arrangement in the near future.

If this is agreed then the 25th September meeting will cover the following:

- Magnox Optimised Decommissioning Programme
- An update on Site Restoration TOG
- Presentation from NuLeAF on developments in planning
- An update on community benefit