

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 21 October 2011
Agenda Item:	5
Subject:	Low Level Waste (LLW) Management and Seminar Proposal
Author:	Fred Barker
Purpose:	To report on developments and a proposal for a NuLeAF seminar

Introduction

This report covers:

- key developments reported to the LLW Programme Delivery Group; and
- the proposal for a NuLeAF seminar on ‘Spatial Planning and Implementation of Strategy for Managing LLW’

Recommendation

That the Steering Group agree that the seminar be organised as outlined in this report.

Contribution to Achieving Strategic Objectives

The initiatives are intended to contribute to the achievement of the following NuLeAF objectives:

- To encourage and assist the NDA, Site Licensee Companies and the supply chain to take full account of the role and needs of the local authority planning system in the implementation of LLW strategy.
- To encourage NDA to provide sufficient evidence base information and to engage in discussion about the potential for a more strategic approach to the siting of LLW management facilities.
- To encourage Waste Planning Authorities to develop policies in MWDFs on the management of LLW (and VLLW).

1 LLW Programme Delivery Group

The NDA/LLWR Programme Delivery Group (PDG) met on 25 August and was attended by the Executive Director (ED) and Richard Evans from Cumbria County Council. The annex to this report contains a list of the key developments reported to the PDG. Attention is drawn to the following:

- LLWR Ltd has established a National Programme Office to assess, monitor and report on implementation of the UK LLW strategy.
- A list of programme risks includes “the absence of planning guidance leads to multiple interpretations of UK LLW policy” (see item 4 on ‘Spatial Planning and Radioactive Waste Management’). Mitigation involves continuing to engage with NuLeAF on policy/strategy implementation (eg on projections of waste arisings and, in future, on the anticipated ‘capacity gap’ analysis).
- Magnox and RSRL (Harwell/Winfrith) are gearing up for LLW disposal to King’s Cliffe, but the start of disposals depends on resolution of the current legal challenge to the Secretary of State’s decision by a local campaigner and of remaining nuclear liability issues.

The next meeting of the PDG (in January 2012) will include discussion of the implications of the Secretary of State’s decision on the application to dispose of LLW to the King’s Cliffe landfill site, including how public acceptability issues should be addressed within the LLW programme. The ED has been invited to give a presentation as part of this discussion.

2 Proposed NuLeAF Seminar on ‘Spatial Planning and Implementation of Strategy for Managing LLW’

Following the success of the seminar in March this year (see link to [Seminar Report](#)), it is proposed to organise a follow-up seminar at Local Government House on 9 March 2012.

It is anticipated that the morning sessions will focus mainly on LLWR’s ‘capacity gap’ analysis and its implications and the afternoon session on key planning issues (eg how to address LLW in MWDFs and treatment of issues such as public acceptability and proximity). The seminar programme will build upon discussion at January’s Programme Delivery Group and engage a wider local government audience in a timely fashion.

NDA and LLWR Ltd have agreed to contribute to the seminar, and the proposed date has been chosen in liaison with the Chair and Vice Chair.

It is recommended that the Steering Group agree that the seminar be organised as proposed.

Annex A: LLW Programme Delivery Group

The NDA/LLWR Programme Delivery Group (PDG) met on 25 August and was attended by Fred Barker and Richard Evans.

Key developments reported to the PDG include:

- a) LLWR Ltd has established a National Programme Office to assess, monitor and report on implementation of the UK LLW strategy.
- b) The programme will consist of a schedule of activities (under 8 categories), SLC joint LLW plans (short high level documents to highlight key LLW activities) and metrics ('dashboards') showing progress. Information about the programme will appear on the LLWR Ltd website over the next few months.
- c) A list of programme risks includes "the absence of planning guidance leads to multiple interpretations of UK LLW policy". Mitigation involves continuing to engage with NuLeAF and the RWPG on policy/strategy implementation (eg on projections of waste arisings and, in future, on the anticipated 'capacity gap' analysis).
- d) Magnox are re-evaluating the case for on-site LLW disposal at the Hinkley site. Consideration is also to be given to whether there is a case for on-site LLW disposal at Bradwell, Dungeness and Sizewell.
- e) Magnox and RSRL (Harwell/Winfrith) are gearing up for LLW disposal to King's Cliffe, but the start of disposals depends on resolution of the current legal challenge to the SoS's decision and of remaining nuclear liability issues.
- f) Magnox and RSRL are also reviewing existing LLW BPEO studies in the light of the framework contracts LLWR Ltd has in place, including for combustible wastes and VLLW disposal. These reviews are examining approaches to 'borderline' wastes, which are ILWs that could potentially be re-categorised and managed as LLW (including disposal to near-surface facilities).
- g) The EA is about to start its core technical reviews of the Environmental Safety Case (ESC) for continued disposal at the LLWR. It expects to be able to comment on the current planning application for additional vaults etc around May 2012. Its preliminary findings are that the ESC is generally clear and coherent, but that there are detailed issues requiring further examination. It is anticipated that there will be some significant changes to the 'waste acceptance criteria' for the site as a result of the ESC review.
- h) The formal award of the framework contract for VLLW disposal is not likely to happen until early next year. Three sites are likely to be included – Clifton Marsh, King's Cliffe and Lillyhall.
- i) An integrated logistics service is now being offered by LLWR through a contract with Direct Rail Services (an NDA subsidiary). This will enable more LLW transfers to be undertaken by rail by utilising spare capacity in DRS's schedules for moving spent fuel. This provides opportunity to reduce costs and will be more secure and safer than road transport. DRS's role could also expand into ILW movements in the future.