

<b>Meeting:</b>	NuLeAF Steering Group, 24 July 2014
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	5
<b>Subject:</b>	An update on NDA Strategy and Operations
<b>Author:</b>	Philip Matthews
<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide updates on developments in NDA Strategy and Operations

### **Introduction:**

This report provides updates on:

- LLW Strategy Review and gap analysis
- NDA Theme Overview Group meetings
- LLWR community benefits package
- New version of the GDF issues register published online

### **Recommendation:**

This report is for noting.

### **Contribution to 2013/15 Service Plan:**

The activities described in this report relate to the following Key Tasks:

- *Continue to monitor and advise NDA and NuLeAF membership on IWM Strategy implementation.*
- *Continue to engage NDA TOGs representing the interests of LAs.*
- *Promote engagement between NDA/SLCs and host LAs to ensure site decommissioning and waste planning is consistent with LDPs.*

## 1. LLW Strategy Review and Gap analysis

The **UK Strategy for the Management of Solid Low Level Waste (LLW)** was approved in August 2010 with a requirement that it be reviewed every 5 years. That review is now underway, and two stakeholder workshops have been held.

NuLeAF's Executive Director attended the morning session of the first workshop, held in Manchester on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. He was not able to attend the whole of the event due to a clash with the Nuclear Materials/Spent Nuclear Fuel (NM/SNF) meeting (see below).

The Manchester meeting was well attended by industry, regulators and other stakeholders, although there was no local government representation apart from NuLeAF. All attendees were issued with a copy of a new **strategic review of the national LLW waste programme**<sup>1</sup>.

Workshop 1 provided an overview of progress and a discussion of the main threats, opportunities and issues that have arisen in implementing the strategy. Different stakeholders had different views as to the priority issues that the new strategy should address. However a key message was that there was a need to ensure that the principles of the LLW Strategy tracked through into delivery on the ground. There was also interest in the use of techniques such as decay storage to help reduce waste arisings.

A second workshop on the LLW Strategy was held in Penrith on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. The Executive Director attended and will give a verbal update to the Steering Group.

The revised strategy will be informed in part by an **implementation review of the LLW Strategy** recently undertaken by LLWR National Programme Office. This implementation review assessed progress against the strategic objectives and statements and sought to identify gaps.

The review found that:

- All 'High Priority' elements of the LLW Strategy have been effectively implemented to some degree
- However, four elements of 'High Priority' have only been partially implemented. A number of other elements of lesser priority were also not implemented fully.

NuLeAF was invited to comment on the draft assessment. While supportive of general progress, NuLeAF expressed concern that a number of statements were only 'Partially Implemented'.

Two of the High Priority statements that were only 'Partially Implemented' deal with issues which are of direct relevance to NuLeAF members, namely

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<sup>1</sup> <http://llwrsite.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/NWP-Strategic-Review-2013-Non-Tech-Summary-Issue-1.pdf>

**Statement 1** on the proper integration of strategy and **Statement 60** on engagement.

NuLeAF also highlighted concern around **Statements 47 and 49**, which deal with alternative disposal options. While these are classed as having been fully implemented, more could be done to promote alternatives where supported by local communities, most notably on or near-site disposal option.

David Loudon, Integrated Waste Manager at NDA, gave a presentation on the LLW Strategy Review at the NuLeAF seminar on 16 June. A copy of the presentation and seminar report can be found on the NuLeAF website<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. NDA Theme Overview Group meetings**

NDA convenes four Theme Overview Groups (TOGs) to facilitate NDA strategy implementation. NuLeAF has representation on three of these groups covering Site Restoration (SR), Integrated Waste Management (IWM), and Critical Enablers (CE).

The fourth TOG is on Nuclear Materials/Spent Nuclear Fuel (NM/SNF). As this meeting requires the highest level of security clearance it is not possible for NuLeAF to attend. However, following representation to NDA's Strategy Director, Adrian Simper, it was agreed that quarterly face-to-face briefings on this TOG will be provided to the Executive Director.

All four TOGs met in some form over recent months. Reports on these meetings are provided below.

### **2.1 Joint Site Restoration/Integrated Waste Management TOG**

A joint meeting of the Site Restoration/Integrated Waste Management (SR/IWM) Theme Overview Groups was held in Penrith on the 10<sup>th</sup> June. The joint meeting of these TOGs is held on an annual basis with the aim of helping stakeholders to understand the internal work of the NDA and how different work streams are collaborating.

Key issues discussed were:

#### **Strategic interfaces**

A review has been undertaken of the main strategic interfaces between Site Restoration and IWM, the threats and opportunities for each and what action needs to be taken. Some important areas of focus are:

- The timing for decommissioning and the advantages and disadvantages to early or delayed decommissioning. A particular interest is the potential for deferred decommissioning to take advantage of decay of radioactive materials (see below).

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nuleaf.org.uk/events-and-meetings/outline-of-each-groups-remit>

- The scope for decommissioning to be undertaken in ways that help waste management, for example by minimising secondary waste and sorting waste through upstream optioneering.
- How clean sites need to be and how this might affect decommissioning decisions about in-situ disposal. There is a clear recognition of the need for public confidence in the decisions made and a need to minimise risks. End state work at Dounreay and Winfrith is helping inform the NDAs thinking and it is intended to develop guidance on optimising end states.
- The need for national strategy to better manage the interface between waste management and site restoration.

There are plans to develop a Site Restoration Roadmap and guidance on how to optimise pace and priority of decommissioning and remediation. There will also be consideration in Strategy III around how best to integrate IWM/SR.

### **Pace and priority**

Magnox Ltd is looking to review the factors that influence pace and sequencing of Magnox reactor dismantling. A paper on this is due for publication in December 2014.

### **Boundary wastes**

A significant amount of nuclear waste is at, or close to, the boundary between Intermediate and Low Level Waste, with other Very Low Level Waste close to being considered 'out of scope'. For such wastes there may be benefits, depending on patterns of radioactive decay, in delaying disposal.

NDA has looked at 20 waste streams and their research shows that there could be significant advantages to delaying disposal of some wastes to around 2130, but little additional gain beyond that date. Some current ILW will become LLW by 2038 (the time at which a GDF is expected to be ready) and as such should now be packaged as LLW.

## **2.2 Critical Enablers TOG**

A Critical Enablers TOG meeting was held in Penrith on the 19<sup>th</sup> June. This was the first meeting of the TOG since October 2013, with the group only having met twice in total. Meetings are attended by a range of NDA staff along with the regulators and the UK and Scottish Government.

Many of the TOG's issues have been taken forward in recent times through the other Theme Overview Groups. However, following pressure from stakeholders and a recognition that discussion of critical enablers will be increasingly important, it has now been agreed to hold CE TOG meetings quarterly for the foreseeable future.

A significant portion of the meeting was taken up with a presentation and discussion on **research and development**.

The 2004 Energy Act gives a duty to the NDA to promote and fund research relevant to decommissioning and to ensure appropriate skills are available. The NDA has developed a **Research and Development Strategy**,  
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published in 2011,<sup>3</sup> and supports a range of research undertaken by the SLCs, universities and others. It is also part of international collaboration and learning programmes.

It has now been agreed that the R&D Strategy needs updating and that the revised strategy will be supported by an Innovation Strategy, a University Strategy and a Communication Strategy to explain the work more widely.

The rest of the meeting focussed on early plans for the revision of **Strategy III** and on the workplans for each of the critical enablers. Key critical enablers for NuLeAF members are on **Socio-economics and Stakeholder engagement**, the **Supply Chain, Asset Management** and **Health, Safety, Security and Environmental Quality (HSSSEQ)**.

No significant announcements relevant to NuLeAF were made but more focus on plans for these Enablers will be made at future meetings of the TOG.

### **2.3 NuLeAF engagement with Nuclear Materials and Spent Nuclear Fuels TOG**

As noted above, security reasons prevent NuLeAF's participation in the NM/SNF TOG but follow up briefings have been agreed.

The first of these took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> July in Penrith, immediately following the most recent meeting of the TOG. It was intended to provide an introduction to NuLeAF of the work of the group.

NuLeAF's Executive Director delivered a presentation on the role of NuLeAF and this was followed by a discussion. The group then moved on to provide an overview of the main areas of their current and future work. Critical issues include **uranics** and the **management of overseas nuclear fuels held in the UK**. NuLeAF provided responses to recent consultations on both, and a separate discussion on these issues will be held with NDA on the 29<sup>th</sup> July.

### **4. LLWR Community benefits package**

It is understood that an announcement is due in July on a new community benefits package for the LLWR. If this announcement is made by the 24<sup>th</sup> July then a report will be made to the Steering Group.

### **5. New version of the GDF issues register published online**

Following on from feedback from stakeholders, RWM Ltd. has now published a new version of the issues register for the GDF process<sup>4</sup>. The new version, which is intended to be easier to use, provides guidance on how to raise an issue and also links to relevant reports.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nda.gov.uk/research-and-development/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nda.gov.uk/rwm/issues/>