

## July 2013, Issue 30

Welcome to Issue 30 of the e-bulletin, which reports on:

- developments in Low Level Waste (LLW) management;
- developments in NDA strategy and operations,
- the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) programme,
- progress on other Key Tasks in the NuLeAF Service Plan 2012-14
- joining NuLeAF; and
- dates for the diary.

### Developments in Low Level Waste (LLW) management

The NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) on 11 July considered a report highlighting updates on development in LLW management ([see website at Item 4](#)). The report covered:

- Defra's response to NuleAF's letter regarding the forthcoming Waste Management Plan for England (WMPE) ;
- an update on NDA's proposed review of their strategic position on LLW;
- LLW Regulators meeting;
- NuLeAF's new guidance on planning and radioactive waste management;
- NuLeAF research on the Duty to Cooperate;
- Community Benefits; and
- the Keekle Head inquiry.

After discussion the SG agreed that NuLeAF should continue to correspond with both DECC and Defra regarding the failure to address radioactive waste management within the proposed WMPE, stressing the importance of providing clear, unified guidance to local authorities on all waste issues.

Defra has now launched a [four week consultation on the WMPE](#) (ending 9 August). NuLeAF would encourage member authorities to respond highlighting the need to address radioactive waste management alongside other waste streams.

The Steering Group also directed NuLeAF to prioritise its work on the establishment of a Community Benefits protocol for legacy and decommissioning radioactive wastes; and to build on the success of the New Nuclear Local Authorities Group in establishing a similar protocol with government.

Government has now announced details of its [Community Benefits package](#) for communities hosting new nuclear power stations.

### NDA strategy and operations

A detailed report was presented to the meeting covering:

- publication of NDA Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13;
- comments to NDA on the consolidation of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) storage in England and Wales, and consolidation of Fuel Element Debris (FED);
- disposal of NDA non-commercial assets;
- the Magnox and RSRL Parent Body Organisation (PBO) competition;
- NDA Theme Overview Groups (TOGs); and
- NDA stakeholder engagement.

Members of the meeting expressed their dissatisfaction with NDA stakeholder engagement in general and in relation to the ILW/FED proposals. The Steering Group directed the Chairman to seek a meeting with John Clarke, NDA Chief Executive, as it was felt that discussions at officer level had not had the impact desired. The SG also felt that it should take a more constructive approach on this topic, giving greater clarity and definition as to what form it expected NDA stakeholder engagement to take, including actions and timelines.

Copeland Borough Council encouraged those member authorities with sites participating in the PBO competition to seek a written socio-economic contract outlining expected deliverables and timeframe. The SG also directed NuLeAF to seek detailed clarification and assurance from NDA on how PBO contracts would be monitored and reviewed.

The full report can be found on the [website at Item 5](#).

### **The Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) process**

At the direction of the Steering Group at the meeting held on 27 February, NuLeAF [wrote to DECC](#) outlining its concerns about the uncertainties of the MRWS process (the decision making process, community benefits, identification of suitable geology, inventory and the generic design of the proposed geological disposal facility). This was followed up by a meeting between NuLeAF, DECC and NDA where it became apparent that the issues raised were broadly those shared by other stakeholder groups. NuLeAF [also responded to the governments 'Call for Evidence'](#) on the MRWS process.

Government has indicated that it intends to publish a consultation document in the autumn to inform a revised MRWS policy which is expected in late spring 2014.

The Steering Group decided to pause any further work with DECC on MRWS awaiting the launch of the consultation on the future of the process in the autumn, which would be considered at the meeting on 23 October.

### **Submarine Dismantling Project**

The Steering Group received a brief update ([see Item 7](#)) on the Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP). MoD has now confirmed that the 27 nuclear submarines will be dismantled at Rosyth and Devonport. A site will be sought from amongst private, MoD and NDA facilities for storage of the Reactor Pressure Vessels once they have been removed from the subs. Public and Stakeholder engagement (PSE) will be undertaken, both during the site selection process and for the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment. NuLeAF is part of the group overseeing the PSE and will continue to be actively involved in the next stage of the process.

### **Local Government Association**

The NuLeAF Executive Co-Directors met with officers from the Local Government Association in June of this year in order to raise LGA's awareness of NuLeAF's work and seek opportunities for closer co-operation on issues of mutual interest. As a result it is hoped that 'First' magazine will take an article from the Chairman in the autumn.

### **Management of the UK Civil Plutonium Stockpile**

A brief update on the government's proposals for the management of the UK civil plutonium stockpile (currently at Sellafield) was taken at the SG meeting on 11 July. The meeting asked that NuLeAF write to government encouraging it to move forward in its proposals at the earliest opportunity.

## **Service Plan 2013-15**

The Steering Group confirmed that it wished the secretariat to produce an updated Service Plan for presentation and ratification at the October Steering Group. Comments were made on a proposed 'report card' which will be circulated prior to the October meeting. The current Service Plan can be viewed on the [NuLeAF website](#).

## **Joining NuLeAF and participating in our work**

Nuclear waste and legacy issues are major concerns for local authorities across the country. Critical issues include decisions about disposal of Low and Very Low Level Waste to landfill, changes to planning guidance, considerations on the siting of a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF), the need to maximise community benefits from nuclear legacy operations and the impacts of the decommissioning of many nuclear power stations.

NuLeAF continues to be an effective voice for local authorities on all these issues. We welcome new member authorities and the active participation of Elected Members and officers in our Steering Group and in the officer Radioactive Waste Planning Group. If your authority would like to join NuLeAF, if you would like to participate in the work of the organisation, or find out more then please contact Catherine Draper at the address below.

## **NuLeAF on LinkedIn**

NuLeAF has a group on [LinkedIn.com](#). We hope that members will use this as a forum to discuss issues and seek advice with other members. We also post regular items of news.

## **Diary dates**

The next meeting of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group will take place on 5 September at Local Government House, Smith Square London, 12.30 to 3.15. It is hoped that NDA will be in the position to give a presentation and take questions on their proposals for disposal of non-commercial assets. Please note this is an officers working group.

The Steering Group will next meet on 23 October at the offices of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. Members of Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates will give a presentation and take questions in the afternoon session. This meeting is open to elected members and officers from NuLeAF member local authorities.

A full calendar of meetings can be found on the [NuLeAF website](#).

## **Contact point**

All member authorities are asked to ensure that NuLeAF is kept informed of any changes to officer or councillor contacts. It is important that these are kept up-to-date, so that the right people receive e-bulletins, invitations to NuLeAF meetings and other information.

The NuLeAF Secretariat can be contacted at *T*: 01473 264833 *W*: [www.nuleaf.org.uk](http://www.nuleaf.org.uk)  
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