

# E-BULLETIN

**April 2011**  
**Issue 22**



Welcome to Issue 22 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

- the review of the implications of the Fukushima accident for the UK
- NuLeAF's response to the Government's consultation on the management of plutonium
- NDA Strategy implementation and engagement with local authorities
- the outcome of the NuLeAF seminar on spatial planning and the management of Low Level Wastes (LLW)
- community benefits and radioactive waste management
- new nuclear power stations and radioactive waste management
- the Submarine Dismantling Project and
- dates for the diary.

## **Review of the Implications of the Fukushima Accident for the UK**

At its meeting on 13 April the NuLeAF Steering Group (SG) considered a brief report on the steps being taken to consider the implications of the Fukushima nuclear accident for the UK.

The Government has asked the Chief Nuclear Inspector, Mike Weightman, for a report on the implications. An interim report is expected by mid May, and a final report in September. It is understood that the report will cover all nuclear installations in the UK, including spent fuel storage and facilities for the treatment and storage of radioactive waste. The report is likely to consider the safety of installations against a wide range of threats, including terrorism, disruption of cooling systems, back-up systems, overall design and the impact of power cuts.

The SG agreed to write to the Chief Nuclear Inspector welcoming the review, making suggestions for specific spent fuel and radioactive waste management issues to be covered, and highlighting the importance of a robust and open review process.

## **NuLeAF's Response to Government Consultation on Plutonium Management**

The SG discussed a draft response to the Government's consultation on plutonium management and delegated authority to the Chair and Vice Chair to agree a final response in the light of comments made at the meeting.

The Government's preliminary policy view is that reusing plutonium either in the UK or overseas in the form of Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel offers the best prospect to deliver a solution for long-term plutonium management. It stresses that this preliminary view will be conditional in that it will have to be tested to show that it is affordable, deliverable and offers value for money, taking into account safety and security requirements, before it would be in any position to take a final view.

The NuLeAF response will not express a definitive position on whether the Government has selected the right preliminary view, but will make a series of points about how the Government should reach a view, including use of a condition about the choice being capable of inspiring public confidence and the need to take into account the views of the communities that could host facilities involved in the preferred choice.

The NuLeAF response will be placed on its [website](#) by early May.

## **NDA Strategy implementation and engagement with local authorities**

NDA's new over-arching Strategy was published on 21 March, following approval by Government. There is a substantial amount of documentation on the NDA website relating to the Strategy and the NDA response to comments on the consultation draft (see, for example, [Our Strategy](#) and [Consultation Details](#)).

Preliminary points to note are that:

- The NDA's process for implementation of the Strategy includes the translation of its "strategic requirements" into *Site Strategic Specifications* that are issued to Site Licensee Companies (SLCs). These specifications detail what the Strategy means for a particular site, which then become embedded in its *Lifetime Plan*. The NDA subsequently monitors and measures the SLCs delivery performance against the agreed *Lifetime Plan*.
- The NDA states that as its Strategy develops it will continue to engage with local communities, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders as appropriate, for example, on matters such as Site End States and defining Interim States, options for oxide fuel management, the possible use of centralised and multi-site waste and material management solutions and the transportation of waste and nuclear materials.
- The NDA confirms that diverse radioactive waste management and disposal solutions will be pursued where these offer benefits over previous arrangements. It will also investigate opportunities to share waste management infrastructure across the estate and with other waste producers where it can see benefit. New waste management approaches will often require different transport arrangements and will be a matter of great interest to planning authorities and people living close to the sites involved. NDA will engage with interested parties from an early stage, irrespective of whether such developments represent new investments proposed by NDA or by other organisations on NDA's behalf. NDA will work with key organisations, for example, local authorities, to build on the feedback it has received on how this engagement should happen and develop a framework for engagement that provides for useful discussion when considering new waste management initiatives.

The implications of the new Strategy will be a main item for discussion at two 'strategic level' meetings with NDA, Site Licensee Companies and regulators that are taking place as follows:

- 22 June, Birmingham & Midland Institute, Birmingham for local authorities associated with Berkeley, Hinkley Point, Oldbury, Trawsfynydd and Wylfa sites; and
- 27 June, Local Government House, London for local authorities associated with Bradwell, Dungeness, Sizewell, Harwell and Winfrith sites.

An invitation has been sent to the appropriate local authorities and an agenda will be drafted over the next few weeks. The outcomes will be reported to the Steering Group in July and in subsequent e-bulletins.

### **Outcome of the NuLeAF seminar on spatial planning and LLW management**

The seminar took place at Local Government House on 22 March. Following discussion of the key points made at the seminar, the SG agreed that:

- further discussions be held between officers and LLWR Ltd to develop understanding of the scale, timing and location of LLW arisings and to assess the spatial planning implications;
- in the light of the outcome of those discussions, the Executive Director enter into further discussions with the Environment Agency and the NDA to identify appropriate approaches to engagement with local communities and their local authorities about the development of facilities for LLW management; and
- the Executive Director seek clarification from Government about the consideration that will be given to local community views in reaching decisions about approvals and appeals against refusal of planning permissions associated with LLW management.

The seminar report is on the NuLeAF website at [please insert link].

### **Community benefits and radioactive waste management**

At its meeting on 25 January, the SG agreed to make representations to Government about the need for a strategic approach to community benefits associated with radioactive waste management developments. As a result, a letter was sent to DECC by the Chair and Vice Chair. The letter set out the range of developments that underpin the case for a strategic approach, and suggests that:

Under these circumstances, we think it entirely appropriate that the Government should make it clear to those responsible for developing or seeking agreement to wider use of certain radioactive waste management facilities, that they are expected, as developers, to contribute fair and proportionate funding for benefits that go beyond those that would arise solely from a Section 106 agreement or a CIL scheme.

The letter was followed up by a meeting between DECC officials and the Executive Director. The main points from the meeting were that:

- DECC remain to be convinced about the case for an approach that goes 'beyond S106', but there is a willingness to discuss the issues further.
- DECC consider that there is still scope in S106 arrangements to deliver meaningful benefit packages.
- There are good examples of 'beyond S106' benefits associated with wind farm developments.
- DECC highlighted the potential significance of business rate reform and pointed to the imminent publication of the terms of a further review.
- DECC would be willing to have further discussions in the summer.

The SG meeting in April also noted that on 17 March, the Energy Minister, Charles Hendry, stated in a Written Answer to the House of Commons that:

Support for communities affected by major infrastructure projects can be provided in a number of ways. Within the planning system, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy can be used to provide for site specific mitigation and for general infrastructure contributions. Developers may also work with communities outside these mechanisms to review benefits for the local area. An example is the recent community benefit protocol published by RenewableUK.

In addition, Government are creating a framework of incentives for local authorities to deliver sustainable economic development. This includes consideration of proposals to deliver better incentives, through the business rates system, for local authorities to promote growth. The Local Government Resource Review will deliver proposals on this by July this summer.

After discussing the community benefit protocol published by RenewableUK for wind power developments, the SG endorsed the preparation of a discussion paper exploring the case for a community benefits protocol for radioactive waste management developments. This will be considered at the Radioactive Waste Planning Group on 14 June and at the next meeting of the SG on 6 July.

### **New nuclear power stations and radioactive waste management**

The Government is giving further consideration to the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement in light of the nuclear crisis in Japan before proceeding with the ratification process. Another process affected by the current nuclear safety review is the Generic Design Assessment process for new nuclear power stations, with interim findings delayed from June to September.

With regard to specific new build proposals:

- Hinkley Point: EDF published a further round of consultation, setting out proposed changes and alterations to its 'Preferred Proposals'. This outlined the changes made following the previous 'Stage 2' consultation in October 2010. The consultation period ran from 28th February to 25th March. Although the 'Preferred Proposals' now address a number of comments made by Somerset local authorities, it is understood that there are still significant concerns, in particular, about a lack of a full appraisal of local impacts (see for example [Sedgemoor District Council voices 'serious concerns' over Hinkley](#)).
- Sizewell: the Executive Director met with officers from Suffolk CC and Suffolk Coastal DC on 26 January to discuss the radioactive waste management implications of the proposed new station at Sizewell. Subsequently, on 18 March, EdF made a presentation to representatives of the Suffolk local authorities on outline arrangements for radioactive waste management.

### **The Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP)**

As reported in previous e-bulletins, the SDP has been conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that identifies and considers the potential environmental impacts of submarine dismantling activities. As part of this process, potential candidate sites for the removal of radioactive elements ('initial dismantling') of submarines have been named in

the SEA scoping report (see the SDP website at [Submarine Dismantling](#)). These sites are Devonport and Rosyth Royal Dockyards.

Potential candidate sites for the storage of resultant Intermediate Level radioactive Waste (ILW) will not be identified at this stage due to the developing nature of NDA and MoD strategies on radioactive waste management.

MoD is currently undertaking more detailed options analysis and environmental assessment of 'integrated options' (which combine different technical approaches, dismantling sites and generic storage options). MoD plans to conduct public consultation in the autumn. Then, taking the SEA, options analysis and public consultation responses into account, MoD will complete its analysis leading to strategic decisions on the project.

The MoD has briefed representatives of Plymouth City Council about assessment to date and plans for consultation. Future discussions will develop plans for the local aspects of consultation in the Plymouth area.

### **Dates for the Diary**

- 14 June Radioactive Waste Planning Group, 12.30 to 3.30 at Local Government House, Smith Square, London.
- 22 June Engagement meeting with NDA, SLCs and regulators, Birmingham & Midlands Institute for local authorities associated with Berkeley, Hinkley Point, Oldbury, Trawsfynydd and Wylfa sites
- 27 June Engagement meeting with NDA, SLCs and regulators, Local Government House, London, for local authorities associated with Bradwell, Dungeness, Harwell, Sizewell and Winfrith.
- 6 July Steering Group, Birkbeck College, London, 11.00 – 3.00.

### **Contact Points**

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.

NuLeAF can be contacted via the Secretariat c/o Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX, Tel: 01473 264833 e-mail: [catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk](mailto:catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk).