

Welcome to Issue 39 of the e-bulletin, which reports on topics and discussions at the NuLeAF Steering Group and AGM held in London on 15 October and other items:

- the Geological Disposal Facility siting process;
- NDA Strategy 3;
- NuLeAF AGM 2015;
- NuLeAF seminar 2015;
- European research report; and
- joining NuLeAF and dates for the diary.

The Geological Disposal Facility siting process

A paper¹ was presented to the Steering Group meeting on 15 October outlining recent developments in the Geological Disposal Facility siting process².

Call for Evidence

The Call for Evidence which sought information on the issues of how to define a community, community investment and the test of public support has closed, and it is hoped that the submissions made will assist the Communities Representation Working Group in its deliberations on these topics. The NuLeAF response is available on our website³, and a series of stakeholder workshops are being organised by central government, with a local government workshop planned for later this year. We would encourage NuLeAF members to attend the workshops to ensure the local authority perspective on these important issues is heard, and will circulate details of the workshop as soon as they are announced.

Discussions at the Steering Group meeting highlighted the importance of the definition of a community and the need for a public education programme in order to ensure the issues are properly understood. NuLeAF will continue to raise awareness of the Geological Disposal Facility siting process amongst the local government community and can provide impartial and confidential advice to any local authority wishing to further understand the issues and the opportunities offered by this significant project (see page 2).

Geology

RWM is currently running a series of workshops on the draft national geological screening guidance. One of these was held as part of the NuLeAF Steering Group meeting on 15 October, where the participants considered the questions posed by the consultation on the draft guidance:

- To what extent do you think our proposed approach to providing national-scale existing information about geology relevant to long-term safety is appropriate?
- To what extent do you think that the sources of information we are using [sic] are appropriate and sufficient for this exercise?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed form of the outputs from geological screening? What additional outputs would you find useful?

1 [Item 4, GDF update, 15 October 2015](#)

2 Information on the Geological Disposal Facility siting process is available on the RWM [website](#).

3 [Response to the Call for Evidence on working with communities by DECC, September 2015](#)

Comments made included: the importance of clearly setting out what the purpose of the guidance was; the need to ensure it was comprehensible by the target audience i.e. local communities; and the need to recognise that it would be a challenge to provide sufficient information in a tight narrative format.

The comments and discussion will form part of the information which RWM will use to refine the guidance before applying it to produce information for interested communities. You can find RWM's presentation on the NuLeAF [website](#).

RWM workshops continue to run until 5 November, and you can find out the dates and venues [here](#). The workshops form part of a public consultation on the draft geological guidance. Should you wish to comment on the draft guidance the [consultation](#) is open until 4 December. NuLeAF will prepare a response to this consultation and circulate it to members for comment in early November.

NuLeAF will continue to work to inform and advise both central and local government on the pertinent issues around this complex process. **Any local authority wishing to have informal discussions or seeking further information should contact the Executive Director, Philip Matthews on 07949 209126 or philip.matthews@nuleaf.org.uk.**

NDA Strategy III

NDA is required to review its overarching strategy on a five yearly basis. The current strategy runs 2011-2016 and NDA are currently seeking comments on an early version of draft Strategy III⁴, with a six week full public consultation on the revised draft expected to begin on 5 January 2016. The consultation on the NDA Business Plan will also take place early in the new year.

The Steering Group meeting recognised that the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review, due to be published on 25 November, will shape NDA's work programme over the coming years. Concerns were raised that cost cutting had the potential to impact negatively on Magnox sites in particular, with resources concentrated on addressing the high hazard facilities at Sellafield. In order that NuLeAF members can better understand the national implications NDA has been invited to give a presentation on its revised work programme to the Steering Group meeting on 28 January.

A further opportunity to discuss these issues will be available at the reconvened National Stakeholder Engagement Event which will take place during the consultation period.

You can find further updates on NDA Strategy and Operations in the paper presented to the Steering Group on 15 October⁵.

The Annual General Meeting 2015

NuLeAF's AGM was held on 15 October, 2015 at Local Government House. The main outcomes of the meeting were:

- the re-appointment of Cllr Richard Smith, MVO from Suffolk County Council as Chair, and the re- election of Cllr Brendan Sweeney from Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council as Vice-Chair;
- the approval of the Annual Report;
- the agreement that the Service Plan should run in step with the financial year and approval of an updated Service Plan for 2015-16;

4 The draft Strategy is published on the [NDA website](#).

5 [Item 5, NDA update](#)

- the amendment of NuLeAF's constitution to reflect the financial contribution of RWM and change to Service Plan period;
- the rescheduling of NuLeAF's meeting cycle to avoid the election and purdah period (new meeting dates will be published on the website shortly);
- that the current Executive Director and Director's Assistant should be offered contract extensions for a period of a further 2 years; and
- the approval of the [Finance and Funding report](#).

Although the AGM agreed that the Executive Director and Director's Assistant should be offered further 2 year contracts, it was noted that the funding situation was not robust. The meeting agreed that the employing authority, Suffolk County Council, should review the funding situation in Spring 2016, and if necessary enter into negotiations with the NuLeAF staff about their employment terms. The meeting also agreed that steps should be taken to encourage corresponding member authorities to make some financial contribution to the running of NuLeAF in order to plug the funding gap.

The AGM agreed to hold the level of membership contributions for local authorities for FY 2016-17 to the current rates.

NuLeAF seminar

The annual NuLeAF seminar took place at Local Government House on 30 September. This year the theme was *Radioactive Waste Management: making communities heard*, with presentations by NDA and DECC. The morning session discussed the draft Strategy III documents. Delegates discussed: the focus of decommissioning and remediation; the use of administrative controls to manage a decommissioned site; waste management principles, and NDA's approach to stakeholder engagement. NDA will use the feedback to inform the revised consultation document.

The afternoon session focused on the community issues in the Geological Disposal Facility siting process. Delegates considered 3 questions from the current consultation:

1. Given the long timeframes involved in siting a GDF, what is the best way for local authorities to be involved throughout the duration of the siting process?
2. How does a community show that it is 'constructively engaged' in order for it to receive community investment funding of £1M?
3. What are the practical options for delivering a legitimate test of public support?

During discussions delegates emphasised the need for the developer to engage with communities early and to understand their needs; that the problems created by the long time frame should not be underestimated; educating the community will be key to engagement; a 'time waster test' should be applied to ensure efforts are focused where there is likely to be a chance of a positive outcome; careful consideration must be given to who would participate in the test of public support, which could be weighted according to the level of impact by the development; and it is important that local authorities are not seen as the decision making body.

Both presentations can be found on the NuLeAF [website](#) and a report on the seminar will be produced and posted shortly.

European research project report

A report⁶ has been published drawing on the major works by the Forum on Stakeholder Confidence over the past 15 years presents the key drivers of public trust in radioactive waste management. FSC experience suggests that in addition to technical requirements, societal concerns about risk and safety need to be addressed in order for public trust and confidence to develop.

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 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 and Twitter

NuLeAF has a group on [LinkedIn.com](https://www.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. We have also recently set up a Twitter account which we are using to alert members of consultations, news and other items of interest as they happen. Our Twitter handle is [@nuleaforguk](https://twitter.com/nuleaforguk).

Diary dates

The next meeting of **NuLeAF Radioactive Waste Planning Group** (an officer working group) will take place on **2nd December 2015** at Local Government House, Smith Square, London, 12.30 – 3.15. Ben Bridgewater will be giving a presentation and taking questions on developments on the implementation of Magnox's national waste strategy.

The next meeting of **the NuLeAF Steering Group** will take place on **28th January** at Local Government House, Smith Square, London. NDA has been invited to give a presentation on the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review and Strategy 3. Other items for discussion at the meeting will include an update on developments in the Geological Disposal Facility siting process and NDA strategy and operations.

A full calendar of meetings can be found on the [NuLeAF website](http://www.nuleaf.org.uk).

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
E: catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk

⁶ [The OECD Nuclear Energy Agency's Forum on Stakeholder Confidence, radioactive waste management and public participation: A synthesis of its learnings and guiding principles](#)