

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 10 th June 2020
Agenda Item:	7
Subject:	Update on national developments in radioactive waste management
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Purpose:	This paper provides an update on recent developments in radioactive waste management and Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) operations.

Introduction:

This paper updates members on recent developments in radioactive waste management and NDA operations. It covers:

- NDA Update;
- NDA Strategy 4 Update;
- NDA Group meetings;
- Magnox Update;
- BEIS Update;
- Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP); and
- CoRWM.

Recommendation:

This report is for noting.

1. NDA update

1.1 The NDA has taken a range of measures to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic.

At Sellafield a controlled shutdown of the Magnox reprocessing plant has occurred. There was also a pause in any work that did not directly impact on safety and security. Some projects have now restarted though many staff continue to work from home. A similar pause in non-essential work has taken place at the Magnox sites, while LLWR has been able to ensure that almost 90% of its staff are able to work from home¹.

The NDA has also committed to the wider effort against Covid-19 and is working with local authorities and voluntary organisations. This includes enabling employees to volunteer in support of the NHS, social care and other local projects. Personal protective equipment (PPE) has been offered, and disposable respirators have been donated to help the effort in Cumbria.

1.2 All NDA Group meetings have been cancelled or will be held online, with the recognition that things are unlikely to return to normal until September at the earliest. NuLeAF is continuing to participate in Theme Overview Group (TOG) and Strategy 4 Development Group (S4DG) meetings via video or teleconference.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-work-pays-off-for-llwr?utm_source=4f122ad9-d0ed-4625-8923-2a6cfcbb4df9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

In terms of wider engagement, all Site Stakeholder Group (SSG) meetings have been cancelled, though some Groups have indicated they would like to see engagement resume in some form. A planned Strategy 4 Stakeholder Workshop was also cancelled. As it stands the **NDA Stakeholder Summit**, due to be held in Edinburgh on the 19th and 20th October, will proceed as planned though this is subject to review.

NuLeAF is in discussion with NDA as to how engagement with local authorities can continue over this period.

1.3 The **NDA Business Plan 2020-23**² was published on the 27th April. This was almost a month later than planned due to the impact of the Covid-19 emergency.

1.4 Publication of the NDA's **Economic and Social Impact Strategy** has been delayed due to the Covid-19 situation and the need to consider its impacts on host communities. NuLeAF provided detailed comments on the draft³ and will alert members when the final version is available. We will continue to engage with NDA as the commitments in the Strategy are taken forward.

1.5 Dr Roz Rivas has been appointed as the Chair of NDA⁴. She has worked in senior roles for Tate & Lyle, ICI, Diageo and Premier Foods and is currently a Non-Executive Director at Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), which is part of the Ministry of Defence, and at Computacenter plc. She will take up her role with the NDA on the 1st September with her term running for 3 years.

1.6 NDA has published its mid-year performance report 2019-20⁵. This shows that while the majority of targets have been met or are on course to be met, a number have been missed or are behind where they should be.

2. NDA Strategy 4 Update

2.1 Work on Strategy 4 is ongoing, though at present it is unclear whether the disruption to NDA and BEIS caused by the current pandemic may delay the planned consultation and the publication of the final Strategy.

2.2 NuLeAF's Director is a member of the **Strategy 4 Development Group (S4DG)** which has been meeting weekly over May and early June. The meetings have been used to review drafts of the various sections of the Strategy, along with the Scoping Report for the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) that is being undertaken. NuLeAF has also been feeding back written comments to NDA.

² https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/nuclear-decommissioning-authority-draft-business-plan-2020-to-2023?utm_source=a2a9b3e8-6d52-4952-b930-a59863f14d6c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

³ <https://www.nuleaf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NuLeAF-NDA-Draft-Socioeconomic-strategy-response.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dr-ros-rivaz-appointed-as-new-chair-of-the-nuclear-decommissioning-authority>

⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nda-mid-year-performance-report-2018-to-2019?utm_source=daa48065-2d3b-4e1f-be7e-327e5b5ff3ef&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

2.3 While a Stakeholder Workshop on Strategy 4 was cancelled, NDA is still planning to run a formal consultation in the autumn and may hold an engagement event in some form at that time. It is also understood that parallel consultations will run on the IIA of Strategy 4 and on a revision of the **Value Framework** used by NDA to consider the wider economic, social and environmental aspects of their work.

3. NDA Group meetings

3.1 NuLeAF's Executive Director attended meetings of the Site Remediation and Decommissioning (SDR) Theme Overview Group (TOG) on the 28th April and the Integrated Waste Management (IWM) TOG on the 30th April.

The meetings were largely focussed on the relevant sections of Strategy 4. However, they also covered:

- **Directive Waste for Site End States (SES)** A review is being undertaken of SES, placing a greater emphasis on the reuse of land including the interim reuse of land; and reflecting changes of approach, for example under Proportionate Regulatory Controls (PRC). There is a commitment to a new round of engagement on SES with local authorities and communities.
- **Sustainability** NDA is developing a One NDA Sustainability Report and assessing how the organisation can respond to the Government's net zero carbon ambitions. Consideration is also being given to how sustainability can be integrated as a thread across Strategy 4. Alyson Morris of NDA will provide a presentation on these issues to the June Steering Group meeting.
- **Integrated Waste Management Programme** Planned work includes that on developing the Near Surface Disposal (NSD) programme and a range of projects on waste and transport containers and treatment technologies.

A meeting of the **Low-Level Waste (LLW) National Waste Programme** was held on the 3rd June. NuLeAF's Director participated and will provide a verbal report to the Steering Group.

4. Magnox Update

4.1 Magnox has announced the appointment of Paul Winkle as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO). Most recently Paul held the role of Director on the Conventional Island Programme at Hinkley Point C and previously was Safety, Security and Assurance Director at EDF Energy Generation. Paul took up his role at Magnox on 1 May 2020.

4.2 Magnox has launched a new socio-economic website⁶ and also published an infographic on their socio-economic scheme⁷.

5. BEIS Update

5.1 Covid-19 has impacted on progress with the development of BEIS' **Nuclear Decommissioning and Radioactive Substances White Paper**. It is understood that 1,200 BEIS staff have been moved to Covid-19 related roles and the resources allocated to the new Policy and other decommissioning work have been significantly reduced. BEIS will be able to provide the June Steering Group with an update on progress with the Policy, including plans for consultation.

5.2 A final draft of **Planning Guidance for In-Situ Disposal** of radioactive waste was presented to April's Radioactive Waste Planning Group (RWPG) and comments from our members have been fed back to BEIS and Avison Young, the consultants involved in developing the guidance. This guidance will support and advise Local Planning Authorities, the industry and regulators in evaluating proposals for the retention of lower level radioactive material in-situ or on site as part of clean-up and remediation.

6. Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP)

6.1 Following ongoing correspondence with Ian Booth, the Chief Executive of the Submarine Delivery Agency, an invitation has been extended to NuLeAF's Executive Director to visit the Rosyth MOD site where the first nuclear powered submarine is being dismantled. Clearly this visit will not be possible until after current restrictions on movement have been lifted.

NuLeAF has asked MOD if it would be possible for NFLA (as members of the former SDP Advisory Group) and Copeland Borough Council to also participate. We will also explore whether a larger group of NuLeAF members could visit the site if it is possible to link a visit with the NDA Stakeholder Summit in Edinburgh.

7. CoRWM

CoRWM has published its work programme for 2020/21⁸. Work areas, tasks and deliverables are noted in Annex A. These include a commitment to work on the community engagement aspects of the GDF siting process and NuLeAF will seek to engage with the Committee on this and other topics.

⁶ <https://magnox socioeconomic.com/>

⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/88099/Final_Magnox_Infographic_2020_English.pdf

⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/887571/CoRWM_Work_Programme_-_2020.pdf