

DUNGENESS A SITE AND B POWER STATION

DUNGENESS SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING

The Visitor Centre – Dungeness B Power Station

Thursday 6th October 2016

10:00 for 10:30

ATTENDANCE:

Ms A Bamping	-	Natural England
Mrs R Cavanagh	-	Dungeness B Power Station
Mr S Coates	-	Dungeness B Power Station
Cllr P Coe	-	New Romney Town Council
Mr R Cook	-	ONR (Dungeness A) Incoming
Mr M Core	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr D Dodman	-	Dungeness A Site SJC
Mr P Fahey	-	EA (Dungeness A)
Mr S Fox	-	Magnox Communications
Mr K Franks	-	Independent Member
Mr A Gorham	-	Dungeness B Power Station
Cllr A Hills	-	Independent Member
Ms F Hunter	-	ONR (Dungeness B)
Mr D Illsley	-	Shepway District Council
Mr A Jakeways	-	ONR (Dungeness A)
Cllr D Lawton	-	New Romney Town Council
Mr O Leyshon	-	Romney Marsh Countryside Project
Cllr J Link	-	Ashford Borough Council
Ms S Mortimer	-	Affinity Water
Mrs A Prentice	-	Dungeness B Power Station
Cllr A Rodriguez	-	New Romney Town Council
Mr J Simpson	-	Affinity Water
Col. G Smythe	-	Independent Chairman
Mrs J Sparkhall	-	Minute Taker
Mr A Stone	-	EA (Dungeness B)
Cllr Mrs C Waters	-	Kent County Council
Mr P Wilkinson	-	Dungeness A Site
Mr J Wroblewski	-	Dungeness B Power Station

GUESTS:

Mr S Napper	-	Radioactive Waste Management
Mr A Parkes	-	Radioactive Waste Management
Mr M Shaoul	-	Radioactive Waste Management

I INTRODUCTION

3529 Col. Smythe welcomed the attendees to the Site Stakeholder Group meeting (SSG). He advised that quite a lot has happened since the last meeting and wanted to update the group on developments that have taken place and will take place in the future.

II APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3530 The following apologies were received:

Cllr Lord Ampthill	-	Rother District Council
Ms K Anderson	-	NDA
Mrs L Barton	-	Lydd Airport Action Group
Mr B Botley	-	Kent Against a Radioactive Environment
Cllr M Burgess	-	Ashford Borough Council
Mr L Davies	-	ONR (Dungeness B)
Ms J Dear	-	Natural England
Chief Insp Elmes	-	Kent Police
Ms C Igoe	-	Romney Marsh Partnership
Mr J Jenkin	-	NDA Communications Manager
Cllr T Last	-	Lydd Town Council
Mr R Lavender	-	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Mr A Parry	-	Independent Vice Chairman
Mr I Stewart	-	Dungeness B Power Station
Ms M Stuart	-	Kent Against a Radioactive Environment
Cllr R Wilkes	-	Shepway District Council

III TO APPROVE THE MINUTES

3531 The minutes of the 26th SSG meeting held on 19th May 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

IV CORRESPONDENCE

3532 A list of correspondence has been sent to members.

3533 Since the last meeting, Mr A Parry has sent a letter of his resignation. Col. Smythe thanked Mr Parry for his service and advised that the group will be seeking a new Vice Chairman.

V MATTERS ARISING – GEORGE SMYTHE

3534 There were no matters arising from the last minutes. However, there was a discussion about the future of FED and it was agreed with the NDA that a Sub-Group meeting could be held to discuss FED options. The meeting was held on 23rd August 2016. Chair asked whether there were any questions regarding this set of additional sub-group minutes, but none were forthcoming. Chair went on to say that the conclusions and thoughts were important on the subject of FED and will be covered within the meeting by various members because it did impact on a great deal of people throughout the district and local councils. Attendees were selected to create a working group to ensure the message went out to the local councils, the district councils, the environmentalists and Natural England. Col. Smythe thanked the attendees for their contribution at that meeting.

3535 Q: Has the agreed press release gone out which was supported by Lydd Town Council.

A: Now that the planning committee has met (as below), Mr Wilkinson will go to the press to advise the outcome and approaches of accepting

FED from Bradwell and will major on the fact that this will also retain jobs for a certain amount of time.

VI DUNGENESS A CLOSURE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

3536 Mr P Wilkinson began by summarising the Magnox company activities over the last couple of years advising members of the new parent body, the reorganisation programme and work on a new Lifetime Plan (LTP). It was realised that these activities had distracted the company from looking after its people. In turn, there were a number of Lost Time Accidents (LTAs) and a number of staff got injured – mainly around slips, trips and falls but the company has put this lapse down to distraction – people not concentrating in the moment. So as a company, Magnox have been spending a lot more time and effort in trying to raise the profile of safe delivery of work and the safety of its people in the field. The Target Zero programme was introduced to target zero accidents and zero harm to the environment.

- *Organisational restructure:* the company has completed its reorganisation programme and staffing numbers across the board have been reduced by about a third. Mr Wilkinson confirmed that Magnox is in a closure programme and the numbers will reduce as the year's progress.
- *Community relations:* Dungeness A still contributes to the Magnox socio-economic fund highlighted in the report. The funding aims are mainly good neighbourhood schemes but it also contributes to more significant schemes that provide some socio-economic benefit when Dungeness closes down and the community ceases to benefit from the station's activities.
- *Ponds programme:* there is a lot of work going on at the site with ongoing decommissioning. The most significant work is being carried out in the Ponds by the use of divers. This is an innovative approach to decommissioning Ponds in the UK and the HSE is overseeing the activities to ensure it is being carried out safely.
- *Plant and Structures:* Mr Wilkinson went on to talk about the more conventional based approach through the Plant and Structures programme and the significant ongoing Asbestos Removal Project.
- *Waste Operations programme:* Mr Wilkinson touched on the building of an Advanced Vacuum Drying System (AVDS) plant, which is a drying system that will deal with Intermediate Level Waste (ILW).
- *FED:* Mr Wilkinson spoke about FED issue and the plan to take FED from Bradwell to dissolve at Dungeness. Principally, this will help Bradwell speed up its Care & Maintenance status. Mr Wilkinson sees this as a good thing for the nuclear industry and a significant saving to the tax payer and the company. Mr Wilkinson went on to talk about the separate Sub-Group that was held and the tour given to the selected members to show the dissolution operation. Dissolving will be carried out within the environmental permit and the EA invited Dungeness to enhance filtration amongst other improvements around the plant to ensure the site is environmentally sound. Mr Wilkinson explained that Dungeness would take Bradwell's FED to dissolve and in turn, Dungeness would send back the ILW packages to Bradwell for storage. The Kent County Council (KCC) planning committee was held at the end of September and Mr Wilkinson made a strong commitment to the Sub-Group that Dungeness would review the position should planning be refused. Mr Wilkinson was relieved to advise that the vote went 4-2 in favour of the proposal and he now feels comfortable to go to the press and describe the approaches Dungeness are making to take on Bradwell FED.

- 3537 Q: A drone was noted flying on the Dungeness estate recently which caused issues with the residents. If there are any more drone flights planned, please can the site inform the residents, along with the members of the group.
- A: Mr Wilkinson apologised and explained that the drone flight was a more security based exercise and only liaised with the B Station. **Mr Wilkinson will give the group and residents due consideration in future and will apologise to the Residents Association separately.**
- 3538 Cllr Carol Waters for Romney Marsh added thanks to Dungeness A and the socio-economic scheme for funding and supporting the Romney Marsh Partnership project. She went on to praise the work of Ms Catherine Igoe, the Lead Officer dedicated to the Marsh and supporting the development of three project ideas that link in with the new branding and tourism initiative.
- 3539 Q: Is the new drying facility (AVDS) solely for the use of Dungeness A?
 A: Yes, there is no intent to accept other site's ILW
 Q: Will there be an ILW store at Dungeness A?
 A: No, all Dungeness A's ILW will be stored at Bradwell
- 3540 Mr Dodman attended the recent Sub-Group and added that it was good to get backing from the local councillors, who were very supportive on the subject of retaining jobs at the Magnox Dissolution Plant (MXD).

VII DUNGENESS B DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 3541 Mr Steve Coates, Plant Manager at Dungeness B gave apologies for Mr Ian Stewart, the new Station Director since July 2016. Mr Stewart is currently on annual leave but had been working tirelessly over the last three months to introduce himself to the team on the station and get to know people around the community.
- 3542 Mr Coates went on to give some background on Mr Ian Stewart – he has a wealth of experience and knowledge in the nuclear industry and has been in the business since 1977, holding positions as Plant Manager at Sizewell B and Heysham 1 then Station Director at Hunterston B and back to Heysham 1.
- *Environmental events:* there have been no environmental events in 2016. Dungeness B have carried out both EA and ONR annual reviews of safety in May 2016 and also routine inspections were carried out by the EA with no non-compliances identified. There have been problems with both grey and brown (common) seals entering the CW intake. This issue is treated as significant and the seals are handled with respect. To date, Dungeness B have recovered all of the seals and released them back into the wild off the coast of Deal. The intention is to put a fix in place during the statutory outage next year when the site is in a position to shut down the cooling water system. On the intake side, Dungeness B plan to refit the grill that was damaged a number of years ago to prevent the seals getting into that area.
 - *Emergency arrangements:* there have been no actual 'calls' on the emergency arrangements, however they have continued to test the arrangements over the last 12 months. There are routine shift exercises planned in October and there is a RADS SAFE (radiological safe) external exercise supported by Dungeness B in November.
 - *Station events:* Dungeness B has a zero harm ambition and Mr Coates was pleased to advise that there have been no top tier (industrial, nuclear,

environmental, fire and radiological) safety events to report. As a learning organisation, the site is always keen to give equal focus on events below the top tier and Mr Coates believes that their open reporting culture drive out any low level incidents to prevent any events of significance occurring.

- *Generation summary:* as a business, Dungeness B are currently on for a record year in terms of output for the whole history of the site. Currently on a rolling 12 month basis, the record performance is in the order of 7.6 TWh however the site looks at the calendar year and to date the output is 5669 GWh or 5.7 TWh. The business plan target is to reach an output of 7.15 TWh, if the site completes quarter four in the same manner as the previous three, they will close the year out with a total output of 7.6/7.7 TWh which is a record performance for the station. Mr Coates put this down to hard work, dedication and commitment. Improving equipment reliability processes are fundamental to safe reliable generation and the site has seen the benefits of that in terms of the safety performance and the output. Mr Coates went on to advise that R21 is shut down at the moment for the planned refuelling outage – this is the sixth outage of the year. The previous five have been completed to the business plan. There will be one final outage in December.
- *Community relations:* The Visitor Centre is thriving with over 15,000 visitors from the community and once again, the site is planning the Free LabLive event in conjunction with The Cheltenham Science Festival and The Marsh Academy. Mr Coates briefly mentioned the apprentice recruitment campaign and the site's strong link to developing young people throughout the local and wider community. Drop-in sessions are available to interested parties and their families. Mr Coates recognised that, in terms of their diversity and inclusion ambition, Dungeness B are not getting the intake from female applicants and so are broadening their recruitment strategy to encourage more females into the organisation.
- *Station highlights:*
 - World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) peer review (29 August – 16 September)
 - Visitors Centre support New Romney County Fayre and Lydd Club Day
 - Jenn Tibbenham won Hannah Woor Award
 - Micky Yule, Paralympian visited Dungeness B
- *IGSN:* The SSG Chair was invited to the Internal Group Security Nuclear (ISGN) visit that report back directly to Jean-Bernard Lévy, the chairman of the group, on the safety performance of the station in line with the fleet and group.
- *Plant lifetime extension programme:* Mr Coates advised that the Nitrogen Plant which provides additional shutdown capability needs replacement. Planning application goes through at the end of October and is one of a series of major projects to get the site through life extension – the community will get a chance to question it through the application process. Town Clerks will contact local councillors directly as there will not be an additional SSG before the site goes through the planning application.

3543 Chair advised that the IGSN was a successful visit. IGSN requested in the near future, they would like to bring a French SSG (most likely from the Fessenheim area) to Dungeness SSG to benchmark and see how the meetings are conducted. Chair advised that he will contact the NDA to see if this would be acceptable in the future. Mr Coates said Mr Bob Fenton, Communications Lead, is willing to be the link between the two SSGs. It was also noted that they would like to visit before Christmas but Chair advised that the next SSG is on 12th January 2017. Mr Maurice Core said that he would raise the request with Mr Bill Hamilton, NDA.

- Q: What is the projected life extension for the B site?
- A: Natural design life is 2018 and agreed extension is to 2028
- Q: Could that be extended?
- A: 2028 is the revised end of life. The company has a life extension programme called PLEX (Plant Life Extension) and currently the company is looking at IPLEX (Incremental Plant Life Extension). Mr Coates explained that as a site comes to the end of its life, critical parameters driving the end state is looked at to see if it can be extended for a short duration of time for around 1-2 years. The IPLEX programme could then be carried out again after the short extension. Mr Coates believes that when it gets to around 2025, the organisation may apply IPLEX to incrementally add to a life extension.
- Q: Why is there not a union representative present from Dungeness B?
- A: Mr Coates will take this issue to the next Trade Union meeting.
- Q: Concern was raised about the damaged screens on the inlet pipes and the amount of herring caught on those pipes in March this year which caused problems with power output because of the lack of cooling water. Is the station doing anything to mitigate that problem next Spring?
- A: At the first opportunity next year during the Reactor 21 statutory outage, the station will be renewing the intake grills and putting them back to the contract design. To minimise the impact, operators have been made aware and there are additional mitigations in place such as regular routines to clear the screens should they see any marine ingress of any description. Last year, one of the filters was damaged by the weight of the herring and since then the site has gone through a periodic programme of checking the filter screens. They are conscious of the fact that herring may come back in the Spring.
- Q: Has the site thought about using Jenn Tibbenham as the role model and mentor to influence female applicants?
- A: This was seen as a good idea and will be taken back to the station. Mrs R Cavanagh confirmed that there is going to be a media campaign launching with the KM group using apprentice case studies on FaceBook; Twitter and the local media. There is also a sign on from 200 pupils from local schools (reaching as far as Sussex). Mr Coates added that the station's apprentice co-ordinator is female – an ex-apprentice technician and now a team leader.

VIII ONR REPORT FOR DUNGENESS A

3544 Mr A Jakeways, Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) Site Inspector for Dungeness A, selected the key points out of the ONR report:

- *Inspections:* one inspection conducted during the period in the first week of August, which is in line with the ONR's new strategy for the lower hazard sites where a quarterly inspection cycle has been implemented. The inspection was carried out jointly with the EA and a waste specialist. The ONR covered a number of Licence Conditions (LCs) on waste themed aspects such as: LC4 – restrictions on nuclear matter on site; LC32 – accumulation of radioactive waste; LC33 – disposal of radioactive waste and LC34 – leakage of radioactive material and containment of radioactive waste. These were related to ONR's interest on how the site is controlling waste that it is accumulating on site from decommissioning.

- *Meetings*: the ONR attended a number of meetings on waste, one covering the Bradwell FED issue and how the site is managing ILW. There was a meeting in September on the Care & Maintenance strategy.
- *Enforcements and Incidents*: no enforcement notices or incidents during the period. There has not been a lot of project work to assess in the period but the ONR have concluded their assessment on Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations (REPPPIR) of the site's hazard report and confirmed there is still no requirement for an offsite emergency plan for the Dungeness A site because a radiation emergency is no longer reasonably foreseeable – that does not affect the Dungeness B site emergency planning area or the requirement for an emergency plan for the B station. There were no Licence Instruments (LIs) issued in the period.
- *Other work*: There are a team of HSE diving specialists on site observing the operational dives in the Ponds to decommission them.
- *ONR matters*: ONR has organised its regulatory structure into three key programmes: Operating Facilities Programme; Sellafield and Decommissioning Programmes (including Magnox stations) and New Reactors, Design Assessment Construction and Licensing Programme. As a result of this, there have been some reorganisation within ONR at the lower levels and there will be some changes to the Site Inspectors to some of the Decommissioning, Fuel and Waste (DFW) sites which includes Magnox. Mr Jakeways confirmed that it is his last SSG and introduced Mr Roland Cook that will take over as the new inbound Dungeness A Site Inspector for ONR moving forwards. ONR assessment and inspection reports are published on the website: www.onr.org.uk.

Q: Does the ONR have any comment about the movement and dissolution of Bradwell FED at Dungeness A?

A: From a safety perspective ONR are content that the Magnox Dissolution Plant will be used for the processing of Bradwell FED – it is a proven and robust plant. Dungeness has a lower hazard operating plant than the Bradwell one as it uses carbonic acid which is quite a slow and a less corrosive liquor to dissolve FED as opposed to Bradwell's use of the more corrosive Nitric acid. It is also has a key benefit to the ONR as they are keen to accelerate hazard reduction across the fleet, so anything that supports that is positive. Other safety benefits include not having to build an additional interim store at Dungeness A unnecessarily as part of other changes which are enabled through having a regional Waste strategy.

IX ONR REPORT FOR DUNGENESS B

3544 Ms Fiona Hunter introduced herself as the new Site Inspector for Dungeness B taking over from Mr L Davis. Ms Hunter has been with the ONR for six and a half years and in site inspection for four. She has been working the last few weeks getting up to speed with the site and its arrangements. Ms Hunter summarised the following:

- *Inspections*: two system based inspections were carried out during the period – briefly, system based inspections look at a safety related system and confirm whether or not the system meets the safety case claims and it fulfils its duty from the nuclear safety point of view. The two systems examined were the fuel assemblies and the diverse shutdown systems. The ONR confirm that both met the safety case requirements and fulfil their safety case duties.

- *Events of particular note:* under LC7 there is a requirement for the licensee to notify the ONR of any safety related events or occurrences that happen on its site – these can range from various levels of importance. At the end of this period, the ONR were informed of an event on the availability of safety related plant. The licensee had taken appropriate action to get the plant up and running with some levels of constraint and it does not give the ONR any concern in terms of nuclear safety to date. The ONR expect the licensee to carry out the appropriate investigation and will examine the results should it warrant it.

X ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE FOR DUNGENESS A AND DUNGENESS B

3545 Mr Phil Fahey, EA Inspector for Dungeness A summarised the report as follows:

- *Inspections:* Joint inspection carried out with ONR (as previously mentioned above in the ONR Report for Dungeness A) looking at radioactive waste. The EA have also been working on the environment review, looking at various aspects of environmental performance with the site – this is the first time such a review has taken place on a Magnox site.
- *Discharge reports:* Following the clerical errors in gaseous discharge reporting recorded at the last meeting, there were two non-compliances to the permit. The first was a failure to report accurate information regarding disposals of radioactive waste and the second, a failure in the Operator’s management system. Both breaches are classed as category four non-compliances as there was no environmental impact.
- *Treatment of Bradwell FED:* it was agreed with Magnox that they can initially carry out a trial using around three tonnes of FED before the end of the year to demonstrate the capability of the MXD plant. The discharges will be monitored and if the trial is successful, the MXD plant will be able to be used to continue treating more Bradwell FED. The first batch will be dispatched in about two weeks. Magnox have also been asked to look very closely at the metals being discharged – they have a permit for that and there is not any perceived risk, but it will be monitored. The EA do support the strategy of dissolving Bradwell FED but just need to make sure that the discharges are in line with best available techniques (BAT).
- *Changes to Compilation of Environment Agency Requirements (CEAR):* EA reported a slight permitting issue – as part of the Ponds decommissioning a new store has been created to store Ionsiv cartridges and Ponds skips. The Ionsiv cartridges will discharge a very small amount of gaseous radioactivity and that needs to be permitted and the EA has put this on their CEAR to ensure that it is covered and any discharge will be monitored and reported back.

Q: In the process of Brexit, are the EA envisaging any major changes to the protocol under which it works with regard to European legislation?

A: The EA are looking at it – there may be some changes but these are unclear at the moment.

3546 Mr Andrew Stone, EA Inspector for Dungeness B summarised the report that covers the regulatory activity since the last SSG meeting as follows:

- *Inspections:* the EA have looked at gaseous radioactive waste. They are happy that EdF understand what has given rise to its discharges and the

impact of those. The EA have also looked at environmental monitoring and transfers of waste to other premises – for example, incineration.

- *Environmental monitoring*: the report refers to an independent monitoring programme that the EA run in partnership with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the environmental regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The results are published in the Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) 2015 report which is available within the next few weeks. It is circulated as a book, CD rom or download from the FSA website.

Q: Was the increase in sulphur-35 discharge part of the planned process?

A: It was anticipated but none of the discharges exceeded any legal limits.

Q: Can the EA email a link to the SSG members?

A: The EA will send this out as soon as it is available.

XI NDA UPDATE

3547 Mr Jonathan Jenkin has sent his apologies and Mr Maurice Core, Site Facing Programme Manager for the Magnox contract, was his representative at this meeting. Mr Core summarised the following:

- *Essex County Council Planning Decision*: this is good news for Dungeness and a good saving to the taxpayers
- *Bradwell Decontamination Milestone*: part of the decision to take FED at Dungeness is in support of getting Bradwell into Care & Maintenance and also that Bradwell are working on other milestones including the significant decontamination of 10,000 square metres of wall
- *Panorama*: the NDA were disappointed with the programme after all the open and frank information shared with Panorama.
- *Sellafield Safety Awards*: it is in contrast to the Panorama programme that Sellafield should get its best safety awards and records this period
- *Nuclear Provision Document*: this has been published: [Nuclear Provision Document](#)
- *PhD Bursaries*: available: [Apply for PhD bursaries related to nuclear decommissioning](#)
- *NDA Insight magazine*: issue 21 available: [Insight Magazine Issue 21](#)
- *NDA Chief Executive to Retire*: John Clarke will be retiring in the course of the next year and the Chief Operating Officer, Pete Lutwyche will be leaving the NDA to take up a job in the private sector
- *Judge's Ruling in ES vs NDA Case*: the judge's ruling did not go in favour of the NDA in terms of the litigation between the NDA and EnergySolutions EU (ES). There are further hearings to assess the amount of damages. The NDA are unhappy with the outcome and will take leave to appeal. Nonetheless, because of the court process, the appeal will run in parallel with the process to determine the level of quantum that may be awarded to ES. There are a number of press releases that quote a figure of £200m and ES have gone public with the amount they are seeking which is half that amount, but the NDA are still contesting it
- *Departmental Change*: the NDA now reports to the newly created Department of Business, Energy and Industry Strategy (BEIS)
- *Vaults Given Go-Ahead*: planners have given the go-ahead for an extension to the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR)
- *Entries Invited for Business Awards*: entries are now being invited for the business awards and supply chain event which will be held on 3rd November in Manchester

- Q: Is there a legal requirement for which the litigation has got to be resolved?
- A: The quantum case hearing is set for Autumn 2017 and will be subject to court proceedings including availability of the judge and court time.

XII QUESTIONS TO THE NDA FROM THE STAFF JOINT COUNCIL

3548 Mr Dave Dodman, Site Joint Council, advised that correspondence from the Unite Union has been published and is available in the public domain. Mr Dodman issued specific questions from union members who have concerns about the court case

- Q: If ES are successful, what could the compensation claim amount to?
- A: The NDA believe that ES have stated that they are seeking £100m – but that will be the matter of the court. The NDA dispute the outcome and the court could determine a figure between £0 and £100m
- Q: Could other bidders follow ES's claim for compensation?
- A: There was a time limit by which the five bidders could not appeal beyond and only Bechtel made a challenge. It is expected that they will wait for the outcome from the ES litigation.
- Q: Where will the money come from if ES and other bidders are successful?
- A: It will all come from NDA (subject to the level of damages) – the NDA has made provision in its accounts.
- Q: If the money comes out of the NDA pot, could this stop/delay programmes (projects at Dungeness or across the other Magnox sites)?
- A: This will depend on the amount of the settlement verses the amount of provision the NDA made in their accounts to fully answer that question. The NDA have a good comprehensive spending review settlement better than other government departments and are not troubled until the next expenditure round. NDA funds Magnox SLC at the corporate level with an annual amount of funding. NDA will work with Magnox to apportion that money around its various sites in terms of delivering the decommissioning mission.

3549 Mr Dodman thanked Mr Core for attending the meeting and answering the questions from concerned members.

XIII PRESENTATION ON THE GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY FROM RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

3550 Introductions: Mr Mark Shaoul, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, Mr Simon Napper, part of the Stakeholder Engagement team and Mr Andrew Parkes, Head of Site Characterisation. Mr Parkes advised that he is a geologist and a hydrogeologist and his responsibility is to understand and decide whether the geology of a chosen site is good enough to design a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) and make a safety case for it.

3551 Mr Shaoul advised that the project has moved from being an adjunct to some of the work that the NDA is doing inside the nuclear industry to what is called a 'Specialist National Infrastructure Project'. He went on to say that BEIS is about to embark on its consultation programme for both the National Policy Statement (NPS) and working with communities trying to push the Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) project.

3552 Until the government and BEIS finalise the consultations (decide on a process and timeframe and how they want to engage with the communities), RWM are making sure they engage in initial conversations with the Site Stakeholder Groups and other stakeholder audiences. They are also making sure they are ready and fit for purpose to become a developer.

3553 Mr Parkes presented a fly-through model of the geology of the UK produced by the British Geological Survey (BGS). Mr Parkes explained that actions identified from the White Paper was National Geological Screening and the objective in providing information that can be used to understand the likelihood of any particular area being capable of hosting a GDF. Part of that came from feedback from the previous consultations where it was felt that information was not there and communities could not make decisions based on authoritative information. It focuses on the long-term safety and does not concentrate on construction and operation safety – it is very much the safety relating to the actual ground system as a barrier. It draws on the RWM published work, safety case and the elements on making a GDF safe and the geology contribution to making a GDF safe. It only looks at existing information held by the BGS in the national archive on geology. It cannot rule any areas as definitely suitable but can identify areas as that are potentially suitable. In some cases, it might be able to suggest an area is definitely unsuitable (for example an area where coal mining took place down to 1,000 metres over a large area) and it will not target or focus on any individual sites.

3554 Mr Parkes is hopeful that RWM will be able to publish, in each of the 13 regions (as defined and broken down by BGS) an indication of the rocks, their relevance to safety and information on ground water etc. to give a high level indication to communities an understanding of their area.

Q: Using this system, how quickly could the RWM say to a community that their area could not be used?

A: For most areas it will not be clear whether a community can host a GDF and there may be some areas where there is not a lot of information that could potentially host a GDF if more detail is collected. In other areas, using information from the geology, it could be said that the rocks there could support a GDF but there will still be unknowns such as faults or ground water. Until a community shows interest, then further extensive work can be carried out to identify whether an area is suitable or not.

Q: What is the preference of rock the RWM are looking to put the GDF in?

A: The three main rock types around the world where GDFs are being developed are: salt – there is no water and it ‘creeps’ to mould itself around any cracks or fractures; hard rocks like granite (igneous) or sedimentary – these rocks are very strong and large cavities can be built within them (the slight downside is if they have any fractures, water will move through – the section of rock selected therefore, should not have many fractures) and finally, lower strength sedimentary rocks (clays and mud stones) – they are not as impermeable as salt, but they are slightly ‘plastic’ over time and if there are fractures, they will seal and the speed of water will move through these type of rocks incredibly slowly.

Q: All the SSGs are based on nuclear power stations but there is an awful lot of other areas to consider ... how is RWM going to get to the general public that may be in areas which are very suitable for this type of project?

- A: RWM is working towards the siting programme by the Summer of 2017 (the government will decide when that is launched). Ultimately, RWM has a responsibility to get the message out nationally to the whole country and its communications team have set up websites, social media and events like SSGs and public events. It is a really important programme to Britain and the government will want to launch it and will be available in all forms of media. The challenge is to understand how much interest will be generated and how RWM copes with that, knowing, ultimately, only two or three communities may see the programme through over a number of years. When RWM carried out the consultation on the national geological screening, not one of those were in a nuclear community.
- Q: Somebody from Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste Executive (Nirex), using their technology at the time, categorically ruled out Romney Marsh and the surrounding area for the possibility of a GDF. Has RWM's preliminary work indicated that this was likely?
- A: RWM has not honed in to specific site areas yet, but would be quite surprised if many places on the south coast would not be possible for a GDF as there are clay rocks below parts of Kent. RWM confirmed that they have not got all the information from BGS yet, but there are other aspects that should be taken into consideration such as the structure of the rocks, the nature of the ground water and the presence of oil and gas.
- Q: How many of these sites is the UK looking to build? Will they be for UK use only or will Britain import any waste from other countries.
- A: RWM advised that the government's policy quotes a strongly preferred choice as a single site, the reasons being cost and environmental impact. The actual surface facility is a relatively small area which may be around 1km², though the underground section will have a much larger footprint. However, if the communities willing to take on a GDF do not have sufficient space suitability of rocks to take either all the waste volume or all the waste types, then clearly, the government will have to consider more than one site. Government policy at the moment will not consider importing other waste from overseas.
- Q: How will you get 'the science' across to the general public in order to get them to volunteer? Previously it was put across to the public as almost a 'dumping' situation rather than the possibility of a centre of excellence in science and business and industrial growth?
- A: RWM have prepared visual presentations to help engage the public to enable them to understand what it would mean to have a GDF located in their community. RWM will see this as an opportunity for volunteering areas and believe that this facility could be transformational for a community in taking it forward.
- Q: Can the GDF get built under the sea?
- A: Yes, absolutely.
- Q: The government made an indication that they are going to invest in infrastructure, where does this sit on the government priorities?
- A: RWM believe they are half way down on the list of government priorities. Tom Wintle from BEIS is set to present the strategy to RWM.

XIV SOCIO-ECONOMIC UPDATE

- 3555 Two large projects have been put forward – one from New Romney and the development of the Mountfield project.

3556 Chair pointed out that only the first three paragraphs need completing to apply for the good neighbourhood scheme. If in doubt, please speak to Sam Fox or Haf Morris from Magnox Communications or contact the Chair. Chair urged members to put in bids for projects as there is still money there.

3557 Chair reported that the case for an extension of funding for the Romney Marsh Partnership coordinator is being looked at this week.

XV ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3558 Chair requested applicants to apply for the position of Vice Chair. Please send a resumé to the Chair or talk to him directly on what the position entails. Chair would like to announce a new Vice Chair by 12th January 2017 meeting. Chair reminded members that there is a vote for Chair and Vice Chair at the next AGM.

3559 Col. Smythe summarised and thanked members for attending.

Meeting closed at 1pm.