NDA Monthly Update

January 2016

Summary

- NDA draft strategy and business plan published for consultation
- Last fuel leaves Oldbury
- Wylfa closes after almost 45 years
- Insight magazine published
- Supply chain event scores 97% success
- Silo equipment delivered to Sellafield
- Sellafield fuel removal milestone
- Key permit approval for LLWR
- NDA website moving home
- Archive construction under way in Wick, Scotland

Diary Dates

• UKTI and NIA Nuclear Showcase, London	19-20 January 2016
• Updated UK Low Level Waste Strategy publication	Late January 2016
• Women in Nuclear conference, London	2 February 2016
• National Apprenticeship Week	14-18 March

Your views needed

The NDA has published its draft strategy and business plan documents for formal consultation. The consultation period for both will run for six weeks, closing on 15 February. The two documents reflect the NDA's five-year budget as established by the Spending Review set out in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November. An early version of the draft Strategy was published in September 2015 for a period of informal engagement with stakeholders. The NDA has now published its response to these comments.

Weblink: Consultations launched

Last fuel leaves Oldbury

The last flask of fuel has been dispatched from Oldbury for reprocessing at Sellafield, completing a defuelling programme that began when the power station closed in 2012. Transfer of the last fuel also removes 99 per cent of the radioactive hazard from the site and enables Oldbury to move into its decommissioning phase. The aim is to reach the passive Care and Maintenance by 2027.

Weblink: Oldbury dispatches last flask

World's last Magnox plant closes

Wylfa, the last Magnox power station in the world, has finally closed after generating electricity for almost 45 years. Closure was originally scheduled for 2015, however, its life was extended for a further five years thanks to an innovative method of transferring partly used fuel from one reactor to the other. The manufacture of Magnox fuel ceased in 2008. Wylfa was the last and largest in a fleet of 11 UK plants based on the ground-breaking Magnox design that gave the nation's scientists a global lead in the race to develop nuclear energy for homes and businesses. The combined additional revenue from Wylfa's extra lease of life, as well as from Oldbury's four-year extension, amounted to approximately £1 billion which has been used for decommissioning and clean-up.

Weblink: Wylfa closure

Insight magazine published

The Winter edition of the NDA's news magazine Insight has been published and is available on the website.

Weblink: Insight published

Waste overview published

The NDA has published an updated overview of Higher Activity Waste (HAW), containing details about where waste arises and how it is being dealt with. The information summarises volumes and forms of HAW in stock and estimated to arise in

future from NDA estate activities. Data has been sourced from the 2013 UK Radioactive Waste Inventory and from NDA Site Licence Companies. The report also includes a summary of total HAW volumes across the UK (from all radioactive waste producers) and an overview of long-term radioactive waste management policy for HAW. The document is aimed at all organisations and individuals with an interest in HAW. It is also being used to inform the development of the NDA's strategy for managing HAW, which is due to be finalised in 2016.

Weblink: Waste overview

Vote of success for Supply Chain Event

Last November's NDA Estate Supply Chain Event scored an overwhelming 97% success rating with visitors, according to a follow-up survey. Virtually everyone who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the one-day event at EventCity, Manchester, had been a good use of their time. The electronic survey was issued to the 1,500 visitors, seeking to understand which aspects of the event had worked well and which might need adapting to ensure the 2016 event will continue to meet business aspirations.

Weblink: Supply chain success

Bulk delivery of silo equipment

One of Sellafield's most hazardous buildings is closer to being cleaned up after delivery of a massive piece of decommissioning kit. The 50-tonne 'transfer tunnel', which will be hoisted into place at the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo, is the main component of the first Silo Emptying Plant (SEP), one of three 360-tonne machines which will scoop out the building's highly radioactive contents. Contents of the 1960s silo must be moved into more modern facilities for storage before the material is ultimately consigned to the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). The delivery follows a recent research breakthrough which established that that the anticipated clean-up costs could be reduced by around £1 billion, and achieved more quickly, by switching to a simpler waste treatment method. The original, complex 22-step plan has been shelved in favour of a 'raw waste' storage option that places material untreated into containers, with a final finishing step prior to its consignment to the GDF.

Weblink: Special delivery for Sellafield

Fuel removal reaches milestone

One of the biggest tasks in the Sellafield clean-up is half way to completion after workers removed 50 per cent of radioactivity from the Pile Fuel Storage Pond, one of four high hazard facilities prioritised for clean-up by the NDA. The milestone was achieved when the final 'canned fuel' was transferred from the fuel pond to a modern handling plant operated by the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL). The stored fuel is several decades

old, some in a fragile state, and the building itself had to be strengthened to withstand retrieval operations. Work is ongoing to remove the remaining pond contents, including 'metal fuel', which is expected to be cleared by April next year and will remove more than 70 per cent of pond radioactivity. Attention will then switch to clearing other wastes.

Weblink: Pond milestone

Key permit approval for LLWR

A vital environmental permit has been granted that enables many more decades of disposing material to the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR). The Environment Agency's decision follows seven years of work to demonstrate that every aspect of the UK facility, near Drigg, Cumbria, can continue to be operated safely. LLWR has now submitted a planning application to Cumbria County Council, seeking to enable the phased construction of three new vaults (9a, 10 and 11) where low level waste would be disposed of in specially grouted containers. If successful, construction of vault 9a could start in 2016 and run for almost four years. The application would also allow higher-stacking of containers in vault 8 and the disposal of containers in vault 9, where they can currently only be stored.

Weblink: LLWR permit granted

NDA website moving home

The NDA's website content has now been moved to the central government website (www.gov.uk/nda). Our current website will be switched off shortly. Web users should be automatically redirected to the new content. Older content will be held in the National Government Web Archives: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/*/www.nda.gov.uk

If you experience any difficulties finding the content on the migrated site, please contact the NDA's Sophie Palmer: sophie.palmer@nda.gov.uk

Archive building work under way

Construction work is now well under way on the new archive that will store nuclear records from across the UK. The NDA Archive, located next to Wick John O'Groats airport, set to open to the public in 2016, will become the single facility to collect and store relevant records from all the UK's civil nuclear sites. The Archive will be accessible to the industry, for research and to the public.

Weblink: Archive turf-cutting