NDA
Nuclear
Decommissioning
Authority

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Guidance for Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs) – January 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 This Guidance defines the remit and roles of the Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs) and describes what the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) expects from the SSGs and what support the SSGs can expect in return. It also provides the basis of a generic constitution that SSGs can adopt to inform their own Membership. The Guidance provides clarity on the aims and operation of the SSG.

1.2 The NDA recognises that each site is uniquely situated, has its own priorities and varied stakeholder interests. There is, therefore, the need for some flexibility in the detailed arrangements that apply at each site. However, all SSGs are expected to adhere to certain minimum standards in their composition, conduct and operation.

2. Purpose of the SSG

2.1 The SSG is a standing forum for communications between the NDA, Site Licence Company (SLC) and the local community. It has the overarching aim of ensuring that the NDA's interactions with local communities are conducted openly and transparently and that decisions taken by the NDA are informed by the local community's views.

2.2 The primary objectives of each SSG are:

	Objective	Examples of how this could be delivered
1	To provide an opportunity for questioning the operators, NDA, SLC and regulators on behalf of the community.	Information circulated by operators or NDA, SLC on local or national issues. Presentations, briefing papers and structured questioning time.
2	To receive and comment on progress reports and forward plans for the sites.	Receive updates on site progress. Request updates on issues of interest.
3	To represent the views of the local community through the provision of timely advice to NDA, operators and regulators.	Represent local views at local and national level: e.g. National Stakeholder Summits, SSG Chairs' Forum, as well as SSG meetings. Raising issues of local concern. Responding to NDA consultations. Input on site socio-economic fund applications.

4	To act as a two-way conduit for information between the Members and the SLC, NDA and the regulators.	Representatives are expected to give feedback from SSG meetings to members of their organisations in a timely and impartial manner; circulate the minutes of SSG meetings and other relevant paperwork to the organisations they represent; and represent the views of their organisations at SSG meetings, including asking relevant questions on their behalf.

2.3   SSGs are not executive decision-making bodies. The objectives above do not interfere with the accountability of relevant decision-making bodies on the sites or of statutory organisations such as the regulators and Local Authorities.

2.4   Submissions to NDA or SLC consultations (Objective 3) are an important part of the NDA's remit. Submissions do not have to provide a consensual view of all SSG members but should aim to highlight where agreements and disagreements exist on the SSG and why they exist. The NDA and the SSG Secretariat will provide advance notice of major consultations to the SSGs: e.g. NDA Strategy and Business Plan consultations.

2.5   SSG activity that is not in direct support of the above objectives should be agreed in advance by the NDA (via the SSG Secretariat and NDA Stakeholder Relations Team).

2.6   As representatives of their local communities, the NDA recognises that SSGs will be approached by organisations that wish to use SSG agenda time for matters that fall outside the NDA's core remit (e.g. nuclear new build, any of the organisations that occupy the Harwell Campus). Where the NDA wholly funds an SSG, it expects discussion to focus on activity at NDA sites. While other issues may be of interest to the SSG, the NDA expects discussion at SSG meetings on such issues to be limited to brief updates and not take up significant agenda time. In all cases, common sense should prevail but the SSG should not be used as the primary vehicle for community engagement by any organisation other than the NDA or the relevant SLC. A similar principle should be applied to invitations that SSG members may receive to attend conferences and other events – if the subject matter falls within the NDA's core remit and attendance would help the SSG to deliver the purpose and objectives in Section 2 of this guidance, then there is a reasonable expectation that any costs involved will be covered by the SSG Secretariat. If it does not, then funding support to cover attendance at the event concerned should be sought from the event organisers before accepting any such invitations and SSG members should discuss such matters with their Secretariat.

2.7   Any questions about any of the above should be addressed to the Secretariat, who will liaise with the NDA Stakeholder Relations Team as required.

3.   Constitution and Code of Conduct

3.1   This guidance provides a standard foundation for the SSG constitution. Each SSG should develop its own constitution that reflects both the NDA's requirements and the local stakeholder requirements at their sites. To ensure alignment with NDA guidelines, each draft constitution will be submitted to the NDA for comment before adoption. New constitutions should be adopted and published on the website as soon as possible.

3.2   All SSGs are required to adopt a Code of Conduct and are encouraged to adopt the Common Code of Conduct (provided at Annex A).

4. Membership and Public

4.1 <u>Members.</u> SSG membership should reflect the local community and its interests, as well as the operational status of the site and requirements of the NDA.[1] On that basis the SSG should have provision to include members from:

- Elected representatives;

- Representatives of Local Authorities, parish councils and community councils;

- Local community groups with an interest in the site, including environmental groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs);

- Local resident associations or local residents with a declared interest in the site;

- Other local organisations such as businesses and the voluntary sector.

4.2 <u>Criteria for membership.</u> Precise criteria for membership are a matter for each SSG and should be included in the SSG constitution. From time-to-time, new organisations may wish to become members of the SSG. Votes to admit a new member to the SSG should be included as an item on the meeting agenda and notified to SSG members in advance of the meeting. Members should vote on a member's potential inclusion based on the following criteria. Those wishing to become SSG members are eligible if they:

- Represent an organisation or a community of interest that warrants inclusion on the SSG;[2]

- Organisations must have a well-defined local interest in the site's operations and be supported by a formal constitution;

- Be willing and able to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of an SSG member as set out in the Guidance;

- Adhere to the SSG's Constitution and Code of Conduct.

4.3 <u>Official Representatives.</u> It is expected that representatives from the following organisations will also attend and provide updates to SSG meetings:

- Appointed representatives of relevant organisations such as the regulators, trades unions, emergency, health services and environmental organisations;

- A representative of the NDA, normally a member of the stakeholder relations team or a nominated deputy;

- Representatives of the site operators, normally the Site Closure Director/Station Manager or deputy;

- Officers from the local councils at County, District and Parish level or Community Councils in Scotland and Wales.

4.4 <u>Public.</u> The public should be able to attend SSG meetings, ask questions and contribute to discussions with members when appropriate. The NDA considers it good practice for the Chair to allow members of the public the opportunity to ask questions for an allocated, proportionate time period following each agenda item.

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[1] Please refer to Section 2 of this Guidance: Purpose of the SSG.
[2] Please refer to Section 4.1 above.

4.5 <u>Press.</u> The press should be able to attend SSG meetings and ask questions at least at the end of the meeting. This is at the discretion of the Chair.

4.6 <u>Role and responsibilities of members.</u> Being an SSG member means that:

- You represent your organisation or 'community of interest' actively on the SSG, including consulting them beforehand on major agenda items and asking questions on their behalf;

- You formally update your organisation or 'community of interest,' after SSG meetings, either verbally or in writing;

- You attend every SSG meeting, where possible, or send a nominated representative;

- You read papers circulated in advance of SSG meetings;

- You update other SSG members promptly after representing them at another meeting.

These responsibilities should be monitored by the Secretariat and enforced where possible by the Chair and/or Deputy Chair.

4.7 <u>Decision-making.</u> Given that the SSG is not an executive body, voting should be avoided except on matters that require formal resolution: e.g. changes to the Constitution, the election of the Chair/Deputy Chair and the admission of new Members. A list of organisations that have a voting member will be detailed in the Constitution. 4.8 describes the process that should be followed for the election of the Chair and Deputy Chair. For votes on other matters, a simple show of hands should be sufficient.

4.8 <u>Election voting process:</u> The Secretariat will inform members at least one month before the meeting detailing the purpose and the process of the elections to appoint a Chair and a Deputy Chair. Each Member is entitled to one nomination per position. Nominees must be SSG Members and should consent to their nomination. If only one named nomination is received, the person nominated shall be deemed to have been appointed and no election will be required. An anonymous ballot vote should be held at the next meeting. Postal votes shall only be used in exceptional circumstances by prior arrangement with the Secretariat. Elections will be decided on a simple majority basis. In the event of more than one candidate receiving the same number of votes, the successful candidate shall be decided by lot.

4.9 <u>Wider community engagement.</u> From time-to-time, the NDA or SLC may undertake wider engagement with the community. In such instances, the NDA and SLC will inform the SSG and engage with its Members. This would allow the SSG to exercise influence without having to manage and deliver wider engagement activities themselves.

5. Chair

5.1 The Chair of the SSG should:

- Be independent of the NDA and the SLC: i.e. not employed by either organisation;

- Be formally elected by SSG members and be subject to re-election at least every three years;

- Be supported by a similarly elected Deputy Chair;

- Be transparent about any conflicts of interest, by declaring them at the start of SSG meetings.

5.2 The Chair is accountable to the SSG members through their formal election.

5.3 The Chair is accountable for:

- Upholding the SSG's Constitution in its entirety;
- Respecting the boundaries of SSG business;
- Planning forward to ensure that agendas meet the needs of stakeholders, SSG members, the site operators and NDA in the context of SSG objectives.
- Managing SSG meetings to ensure that a balance of views is heard and that all members are able to contribute to discussions.
- Liaising with the Secretariat to enable the development of both new and existing members through appropriate training, site visits and other support.
- In conjunction with other nominees, representing the SSG at national level and in other meetings as needed.[3]
- Circulating updates to SSG members from any relevant meetings they attend.
- Ensuring SSG subgroups update the full SSG meeting, with an opportunity for discussion.
- Reviewing SSG performance and operation at least every five years with the NDA, SLC and SSG (please see Section 12).
- Assisting the Secretariat in assessing SSG activity requirements for the year ahead.
- Considering with the Secretariat how best to provide for smooth succession of the Chair post.

5.4 In considering the selection of a Chair, the SSG will want to consider qualities such as independence, local reputation, experience in chairing groups of this sort and having the time, interest and willingness to fulfil this demanding role.

6. The Deputy Chair

6.1 The Deputy Chair of the SSG should:

- Be independent of the SLC and NDA: i.e. not employed by either;
- Be formally elected by SSG members and be subject to re-election at least every three years;
- Provide support to the Chair;
- Be transparent about any conflicts of interest, by declaring them at the start of SSG meetings.

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[3] This includes representing views expressed on the SSG with which the Chair/Deputy does not agree.

6.2 The Deputy Chair is accountable for:

- Upholding the SSG's constitution in its entirety;

- Respecting the boundaries of SSG business;

- Covering the accountabilities of the Chair in the Chair's absence (see section 5.3);

- In conjunction with other nominees, representing the SSG at national level and in other meetings as needed.

7. Secretariat

7.1 The SLC will provide Secretarial support funded by the NDA. This Secretarial support should include:

- Administering SSG meeting dates, venues and refreshments;

- Reimbursing agreed out-of-pocket expenses for members on SSG business;

- Booking travel tickets and accommodation for members on SSG business;

- Administering the emolument for the Chair and Deputy Chair (see section 11);

- Arrange minute-taking and, where applicable, simultaneous translation into Welsh;

- Promptly circulating and publishing minutes from SSG meetings to members and wider interested parties, including an Executive Summary of key bullet points that members can pass on to their organisation;

- Managing and updating the relevant website;

- Circulating relevant papers to members promptly, including communications from relevant external bodies: e.g. the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and the Environment Agencies;

- Organising inductions for new SSG members;

- Organising biennial (i.e. once every two years) site visits for SSG members or if there is a business need identified by the NDA or SLC;

- Liaising with the Chair and with adjacent sites (where appropriate) to ensure that relevant issues are adequately covered on SSG agendas.

7.2 Information volume and format. The Secretariat has an important role in challenging the organisations and individuals that submit information to the SSG to help ensure that it is as useful and relevant as possible. Questions to ask include but are not limited to:

- Is the information relevant?

- Does the information assist the SSG in fulfilling its purpose and remit?

- Is the information for noting, discussion or a decision?

- Can the information be presented in a more useful way for SSG members given their time constraints and technical background?

- What information would they like to be passed to SSG members' constituents?

- Is the information presented in a suitable format to easily allow this?

- Are there specific questions that merit further discussion by members' constituents?

7.3 Where sites are joint or closely adjacent and share, for historic reasons, an SSG (e.g. with EDF Energy at Dungeness, Hinkley Point, Hunterston and Sizewell and the MoD at Dounreay), the Secretariats or relevant Communications Officers should:

- Jointly input to agenda planning with the SSG Chair;

- Recognise that, although sites may be owned and operated by different organisations, there is significant overlap and some common services on shared sites. The agenda for SSG meetings should reflect this and allocate an appropriate proportion of time to each site, based on the needs and interests of the SSG members as well as the site operators themselves.

8. Meeting Location and Frequency

8.1 Meetings should be advertised and must be held in locations that are easily accessible to members of the public and press, ideally within easy reach of public transport and with suitable parking. The timing should be convenient to stakeholders so that, as far as possible, they are not inhibited or prevented from attending.

8.2 The SSG Chair will choose the venue and location of SSG meetings from a shortlist of appropriate venues produced by the Secretariat. Cost and the general suitability should be important considerations in selecting meeting venues. As a minimum, all venues should:

- Have appropriate capacity;

- Provide seating and presentation facilities;

- Provide appropriate audio and visual equipment and catering facilities;

- Be able to receive payment by BACS or credit card.

8.3 The SLC, in discussion with the NDA, will determine the appropriate level of meetings per year taking account of the site's work programmed. This is expected to be between one and four meetings a year.

8.4 As the need arises, consideration should be given to holding additional or special meetings to deal with particular issues that may fall outside the routine business of the SSG. Equally, the SSG may choose to set up subgroups to address specific topics on behalf of the whole SSG. Each request to convene a subgroup meeting must be submitted to the Secretariat and approved by the NDA. Approved subgroups should seek to reflect SSG membership as set out in section 4.1. The work of all SSG sub-groups should be regularly shared with the relevant SSG and an appropriate opportunity for discussion given.

9. Communications

9.1 Each SSG should have an online presence on an appropriate web platform.

9.2 As a minimum, the SSG website should be frequently updated with:

- Dates, locations and agendas of future meetings;

- Past minutes and reports;

- Full list of members and who they represent;

- Key papers of interest to the community regarding SSG business;

- SSG Constitution and Code of Conduct;

- Reciprocal links to partner websites such as Local Authorities, SLC, NDA etc.

9.3 All organisations providing information to the SSG are responsible for ensuring it is accessible and useful to members and can be disseminated to members' organisations easily.

10. Capacity Building

10.1 Induction. To ensure the effective operation of the SSG, new members should undergo an induction process that, as a minimum, would include:

- An information pack including: a sheet about the site, copies of this Guidance, the SSG Constitution and Code of Conduct and any relevant SSG policies;

- Meeting the SSG Chair and Secretariat to welcome them on board and clarify any questions about the SSG and its Constitution.

10.2 Information and skills gaps. Members should be encouraged to recognise their own needs to understand the issues that come before them. Additionally, SSGs should identify annually the information and skills gaps that prevent them fulfilling their objectives. The secretariat, SLC and NDA will consider how best to address these requirements.

11. NDA Support

11.1 Chairs' and Deputy Chairs' emolument. Via the Secretariat, the NDA will provide an emolument to Chairs and Deputy Chairs that recognises their enhanced role on the SSGs. Chairs are entitled to claim £5,500 and Deputy Chairs £1,650 per annum, which will be paid six monthly in arrears by BACs. The emolument acknowledges the extra work involved in the preparation for meetings related to the NDA's core mission, chairing meetings, undertaking appropriate follow-up actions from meetings and local car mileage associated with undertaking the role of SSG Chair or Deputy Chair.

11.2 Expenses. Via the Secretariat, the NDA will meet pre-approved out-of-pocket expenses when on SSG business, such as reasonable travel costs. Travel should only take place if absolutely necessary to delivering SSG business. Less expensive, safer and environmentally responsible alternatives such as telephone or videoconference must have been considered as a first option before travelling is arranged. When travelling on SSG business, SSG members should choose their mode of transport based upon what is safe, time-effective and best value for money. When selecting their method of travel they should consider the practicalities of the journey in terms of relevance to the SSG, their own time and other related costs, as well as the actual transport cost. All travel must be agreed in advance with and booked via the Secretariat.

In line with NDA policy on travel expenses, SSG members travelling by rail on essential SSG business during normal working hours are entitled to travel first-class if the train journey time is longer than two hours. Legitimate claims for additional expenses will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Claims may only be made with prior approval along with valid receipts and necessary paperwork.

11.3 The NDA Stakeholder Relations Team will:

- Ensure NDA representation at all SSG main meetings or arrange informed cover, except in exceptional circumstances;

- Offer regular meetings to the Secretariat and SSG Chair to clarify NDA Guidance, policies and plans;

- Ensure timely responses to SSG queries, including providing information upon request;

- Facilitate exchange visits between SSGs upon request, via the Secretariat;

- Provide oversight and advice regarding SSG operation, including maintaining an appropriate consistency of approach across the UK;

- Support an SSG Chairs' Forum meeting;

- Provide a Meeting Report from NDA national stakeholder events, with an Executive Summary for ease of circulation and reading;

- Clarify in advance when a response to a major consultation is required from the SSGs: e.g. Business Plan or Strategy consultation;

- Provide advice and expertise on public and community engagement;

- Keep SSG Chairs informed, where possible in advance, of announcements that are likely to generate interest locally.

12. Review of SSG

12.1 To ensure constant evolution and opportunity for improvement, SSG progress should be reviewed at least every five years. A prompt for this review could be when a new Chair is elected. This review must involve all SSG members, the NDA, SLC and potentially other interests depending on the circumstances of the site. The review should cover all aspects of the Constitution, including:

- Progress against objectives;

- Membership;

- Roles and accountabilities of the Chair/Deputy Chair;

- Administration and procedures;

- Information and training needs for all members;

- Website and communication;

- NDA and Secretariat support.

12.2 The results of each review should be made public on the website so that learning can be shared across all SSGs.

12.3 Where necessary, the NDA will provide resources required to undertake the external review.

12.4 Arrangements for engaging with local communities during care and maintenance will be discussed and agreed between the SSG, local community, SLC and NDA prior to a site entering care and maintenance.

Annex A: Site Stakeholder Group (SSG) Code of Conduct

- Respect each person both during and outside of the SSG meeting.

- Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda and reports.

- Participate fully in the meeting.

- Listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind.

- Do not talk while others are talking – allow people their say.

- Contribute positively to the discussions.

- Try to be concise and avoid speeches.

- Challenge only ideas, not people.

- It is the Chair's responsibility to bring the meeting to order.

- The Chair has right of sanction against Members.

- Have the best interests of the organization you represent in mind at all times.

- Be punctual.

- Send apologies to the Secretariat if you are unable to attend a meeting and, where possible, nominate a deputy to attend on your behalf.

- Turn off mobile phones and other electronic devices that may interrupt the meeting.