

**HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP**  
**SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE SIXTY FOURTH MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 JUNE 2022 AT THE WATERSIDE HOTEL, ARDROSSAN ROAD, WEST KILBRIDE, KA23 9NG**

**Chair's Opening Remarks and Vice Chair Updates and Correspondence**

Mrs Holmes was pleased to welcome everyone in person. She welcomed Councillor Ian Murdoch to his first meeting as an Elected Member and welcomed back Cllr Alan Hill. Cllr Tom Marshall and Cllr Todd Ferguson were congratulated on being re-elected. North Ayrshire Council has selected Elected Members representing the North Coast as the Council reps on the SSG and there is currently one vacancy. Mrs Holmes conveyed her thanks to previous Councillors on the SSG – Robert Barr, Alex Gallagher and John Glover – particularly Mr Barr who had an exceptional attendance record at SSG meetings. The Chair and Vice Chair have had monthly updates from Hunterston A Site Director. They visited Hunterston B Station to view the upgraded defueling route. It was hoped that the Garnock Community Hub rescheduled visit would be before the end of June. The Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting on 20 May was online and included an update on NuLEAF (Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum).

**Actions and Approval of Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of the virtual meeting of 3 March 2022 were approved and an update on actions received.

**Hunterston B Report – Mr Joe Struthers**

The focus has been on the statutory outage of Reactors 3 and 4 and the approval of the safety cases for defueling on 16 May 2022. Flask corridor improvement works have taken place over a six month period. Covid is being managed on site, with restrictions reduced. Industrial safety performance has been strong throughout the period. An investigation is being carried out after an event at the end of March whereby a 50v direct current (DC) essential supply system had been incorrectly isolated and did not work in line with the operating rules. This did not impact nuclear safety but was reported and is being investigated as good practice.

**ONR Report – Mr Stuart Fannin**

ONR has been very busy assessing and permissioning the safety cases as well as addressing the change in the refuelling process to reflect defueling regulations. Formal permission to commence defueling was given on 21 March 2022 and can be seen on ONR's website. Two electrical engineering inspections were carried out, which were graded green. ONR was disappointed that the 50v DC essential supply system was incorrectly isolated. The system supports alarms and indications to the Central Control Room and supports the remote control of plant within the Control Room. It is important that the Station continues to apply robust deconfiguration processes and ONR does not want to see contravention of licence conditions.

**SEPA Report – Mr Keith Hammond**

SEPA has been busy with meetings in preparation for the handover of the site to Magnox. Inspectors have been on site twice in respect of the two events involving the loss of control of oil. The event in February involved the loss of approx. 1300 litres of radioactively contaminated oil from a gas circulator settling tank and is still under investigation. The second event relates to a small ongoing non-radioactive leak of approx. 50 litres per quarter of fully biodegradable oil from an oil-filled transformer cable. The source of the leak is still being investigated.

**Hunterston A Reports – Mr Mark Blackley**

Covid arrangements on site have ended. Conventional safety performance has been good. There were no significant injuries during 2021/22 or radiological, nuclear safety or security events. A high-level inspection of stacks at 40-50mm and 10-15mm showed a small hole, discovered after filtration, before sampling. This made the stack discharge 0.3% higher but there is no tangible difference to the SEPA returns. 71 tons of ILW was removed from the final bunker. It is anticipated that the bunker will be empty by late summer. The Learning and Development Centre has been demolished. A new Effluent Treatment Plant has been installed and welfare facilities have been improved. 64 resource requests were filled. Key focus is on 4 new Health Physics Trainees who start in June and 2 Craft Apprentices.

**ONR Report – Mr Stuart Fannin**

Mr Fannin replaced Mr Kings as Hunterston A ONR Inspector from 5 April. Two control inspections under Licence Condition 11 and Licence Condition 17 and a fire inspection were graded green. Risk assessments and fire evacuation routes in the SILWE plant are being considered for active commissioning.

**SEPA Report –**

SEPA's report on Hunterston A was circulated with the meeting papers. Ms Hayes was not present at the meeting.

**NDA Reports – Mr David Wallace**

Ms Hogg has been seconded to Scottish Government as the result of stakeholder feedback. Magnox fuel reprocessing ends at Sellafield in July 2022. The GDF Siting Process is underway, with geophysical surveys (sonar surveys of deep rock) to begin in Cumbria. The Supply Chain Event (and Awards Ceremony) will take place on 21 July 2022 in Telford and is expected to be the largest event held. The NDA Stakeholder Summit will be in person in Edinburgh on 7/8 September. The Gender Pay Gap 2020/21 Report has been published and is available on the website.

**Update from Scottish Government – Ms Diane Hamilton, Ms Laura Hogg**

The next Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting will take place virtually on 23 August 2022 at 2.00pm. The Minister for Environment and Land Reform, Mairi McAllan MSP, is expected to be in attendance. A response to the review on the Radioactive Substances Common Framework is expected from the UK Government in summer 2022. The Scottish Higher Activity Waste workplan is being prepared.

There were many questions asked by members after each presentation, the detail of which can be read in the full Minute of the meeting, available from the Secretariat.

**Next Meeting – Thursday 1 September 2022 at 1.30 pm, in person at The Waterside Hotel, East Kilbride.**



**HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP  
MINUTES OF SIXTY FOURTH MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 1 JUNE 2022 AT 1.30 PM  
THE WATERSIDE HOTEL, ARDROSSAN ROAD, WEST KILBRIDE, KA23 9NG**

**Present**

**Magnox Ltd**

Mr Mark Blackley (Site Director)  
Mrs Jill Callander (SSG Secretariat)  
Mr Sean Marshall (Magnox Communications)  
Mr Reuben Phillips (Waste Manager, Hunterston A)  
Mr Alistair Walker (Programme Delivery Manager)

**EDF (Hunterston B)**

Mr Joe Struthers (Station Director)

**Community Council Representatives**

Mr Jamie Black (Largs CC)  
Mrs Rita Holmes – SSG Chair (Fairlie CC)  
Mr John Lamb (West Kilbride CC)

**SEPA**

Mr Keith Hammond (Hunterston B)  
Mr Paul Dale (Hunterston A)

**North Ayrshire Council (NAC)**

Cllr Ian Murdoch (North Coast)  
Mr Stewart Mackenzie (Protective Services)

**ONR**

Mr Stuart Fannin (Hunterston B)

**NDA**

Mr David Wallace (Stakeholder Lead Scotland)

**Scottish Government**

Ms Diane Hamilton  
Ms Laura Hogg

**In Attendance**

Ms Sheila Adams (Minutes)  
Mr Graham Buckley (Member of Public)

Mr John Glover (Member of Public)  
Mr Malcolm Milne (Member of Public)

**Apologies**

Ms Clare Bond (Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM))  
Mr Angus Cochran-Patrick (Hunterston Estate)  
Cllr Todd Ferguson (North Coast)  
Mr John McHenry (Cumbrae Community Council)  
Ms Melanie Hayes (SEPA)  
Ms Lesley Jeffery (Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team)  
Cllr Tom Marshall (North Coast)  
Ms Jane McGeorge (Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team)  
Mr Stuart McGhie (SSG Vice Chair)  
Mr Scott McKenzie (North Ayrshire Council, Protective Services)  
Cllr Alan Hill (North Coast)

**1. Chairman's Opening Remarks and Declarations of Interest**

Mrs Holmes, Chair, welcomed everyone to the sixty fourth meeting of the Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group and was pleased to welcome everyone back in person. In particular, she welcomed Councillor Ian Murdoch to his first meeting as an Elected Member and welcomed back Cllr Alan Hill, who has previously served on the Site Stakeholder Group.

Cllr Tom Marshall and Cllr Todd Ferguson had sent apologies as they had other commitments, but Mrs Holmes congratulated them on being re-elected. She noted that North Ayrshire Council has selected the Elected Members representing the North Coast as the Council representatives on the Site Stakeholder Group and as there are five positions available, there is currently one vacancy. Mrs Holmes conveyed her thanks to previous Councillors on the Site Stakeholder Group – Robert Barr, Alex Gallagher and John Glover – particularly Mr Barr who had an exceptional attendance record at Site Stakeholder Group meetings and was supportive of both Stations.

Mrs Holmes read out the apologies as listed above. She welcomed Mr Paul Dale from SEPA, on behalf of Melanie Hayes, and Mr Stewart Mackenzie, North Ayrshire Council Protective Services, on behalf of Mr Scott McKenzie.

For the benefit of the new faces at the meeting, introductions were made around the table.

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2. Chair and Vice Chair Updates and Correspondence Magnox SSG Chairs and Vice Chairs Meeting – 11 February 2022, 20 May 2022**

Since the last meeting in March 2022, the Chair and Vice Chair have had monthly updates from Mr Blackley, Hunterston A Site Director. They visited Hunterston B Station on 12 May for an update from Mr Struthers, Site Director, and to view the upgraded defueling route. Mrs Holmes was pleased to have the opportunity to speak to staff about the improvements to the defueling route and the staff are so obviously enthusiastic and proud of the work. Hunterston B Station was thanked for its positive engagement with the Site Stakeholder Group and its high standard of liaison. Hunterston A site has led the way on this since 2006. It was hoped that Mr Wallace, NDA, Mr McGhie and Mrs Holmes would be able to visit the Garnock Community Hub before the end of June, which was rescheduled due to adverse weather conditions in March.

The Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting on 20 May was online. An update was given by Phil Matthews of NuLEAF (Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum) with a Question and Answer session to better understand the relationship between the NDA and NuLEAF. Mr Bill Hamilton of Magnox updated on plans for Site Stakeholder Groups going forward. Draft Terms of Reference are currently out for discussion on a new NDA / NGO Forum to be set up. A BEIS / NGO Forum and an ONR / NGO Forum already exists.

## **3. Actions and Approval of Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of the Site Stakeholder Group meeting, held on 3 March 2022, virtually on the Zoom platform, were proposed for approval by Mr John Lamb and seconded by Mr Jamie Black.

Update on Actions:

- Ms Adamson to report back on questions asked, not able to be answered at the meeting. Responses were received and circulated to members by email – discharged.
- Secretariat to write to Mr Kings conveying the thanks and best wishes of the Site Stakeholder Group – letter sent – discharged.
- Jill Callander to arrange an induction for new members following the elections in May for any new SSG members – Mrs Callander will set up a site meeting and induction for new members and circulate the date.

- Mr Wallace to chase up Hunterston B Station Closure Economic Report being produced by North Ayrshire Council – Mr Wallace updated that the report is almost complete but not yet available. He suggested that North Ayrshire Council is invited to the next meeting to present the findings.

Action – Secretariat to invite North Ayrshire Council to the September Site Stakeholder Group meeting to present the findings of the Hunterston B Station Closure Economic Report.

#### 4. Hunterston B Station Reports

##### **Hunterston B Report – Mr Joe Struthers**

The report issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. The start of removal of spent fuel from the reactors was recognised as another milestone at Hunterston B. The focus has been on the statutory outage of Reactors 3 and 4 and the approval of the safety cases for defueling on 16 May 2022. Flask corridor improvement works have taken place over a six-month period of upgrade work. Updates have been made for safety and efficiencies. Mr Struthers was pleased to hear the positive feedback from the Chair. Covid is being managed on site, with restrictions reduced as per Government guidelines. Industrial safety performance has been strong throughout the period. An investigation is being carried out after an event at the end of March whereby a 50v direct current (DC) essential supply system had been incorrectly isolated and did not work in line with the operating rules. This did not impact nuclear safety but was reported and is being investigated as good practice.

##### **ONR Report – Mr Stuart Fannin**

The ONR report for January-March 2022 issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Mr Fannin summarised key points. ONR has been very busy, spending a lot of time assessing and permissioning the safety cases as well as addressing the change in the refuelling process to reflect defueling regulations. The most significant difference and reason for the time delay is due to the key risk in defueling being returning the fuel plug unit, without a fuel stringer attached to it, back to the reactor. This has potential to cause significant damage. ONR is satisfied with the Station's control measures and consequence assessment. The formal permission to commence defueling was given on 21 March 2022 and this can be seen on ONR's website. Two electrical engineering inspections were carried out, which were graded green and ONR was satisfied with the isolation process. Mr Fannin confirmed that defueling formally started on 16 May 2022. He pointed out that although Reactor 3 is isolated and shut down, it is still subject to operational rules, so he was disappointed that the 50v DC essential supply system was incorrectly isolated. The system supports alarms and indications to the Central Control Room and supports the remote control of plant within the Control Room. It is important that the Station continues to apply robust deconfiguration processes and ONR does not want to see contravention of licence conditions.

##### **SEPA Report – Mr Keith Hammond**

The report issued in advance of the meeting was taken as read. Mr Hammond highlighted key points. SEPA has been busy with meetings in preparation for the handover of the site to Magnox. Inspectors have been on site twice and the two events are detailed in the report, both involving the loss of control of oil. The event in February, reported at the March meeting, involved the loss of approximately 1300 litres of radioactively contaminated oil from a gas circulator settling tank and is still under investigation. The second event relates to a small ongoing non-radioactive leak of approximately 50 litres per quarter of fully biodegradable oil from an oil-filled transformer cable. The source of the leak is still being investigated.

## Members Question and Answer Session

Mr Lamb asked Mr Struthers about the defueling route and handling and craneage from the Reactors to the Ponds and if this was creating a bottleneck and if there was an alternative. Mr Struthers responded that there is just one fuelling machine, however a stock of fuel in the ponds creates a buffer, ensures continuous processing. Mr Lamb further asked how much buffer stock there was. Mr Struthers replied that this varies from week to week and month to month but is typically a few weeks' worth.

Mr Lamb asked about availability of flasks and if there was any guarantee of numbers. Mr Struthers advised that Hunterston B is being prioritised for flask availability and is working with Sellafield to build a relationship.

Mr Lamb referred to the oil leaks being investigated by SEPA and noted the redundancy within the system of the critical equipment shutdown. He asked if the transformer being off for any length of time affects progress. Mr Struthers advised this is not the case. The Station is working with the Contractor to identify the source of the leak. Repairs will be planned, and the transformer taken out of service to repair.

Mr Lamb asked about transporting the flasks to the rail head along the A78. Mr Struthers advised that the route is subject to approvals for transport and the Station will continue to work with the authorities.

Mr Lamb asked if permission to demolish the buildings on site was progressing. Mr Struthers confirmed that this is not the case and there is currently no demolition or construction planned on site. Existing buildings are being repurposed. The Station is not in a position to make decisions on demolition and construction, and it is not in the critical path.

Mr Lamb asked about progress on NDA / EDF. Mr Struthers confirmed that any transfer would be subject to regulatory approval.

Cllr Murdoch noted that the Station was doing what it could to find the source of the oil leak but asked about the potential for the leak to reach and contaminate a wider area. Mr Struthers reassured members that the leak is entirely within the middle of the site and relates to 50 litres/quarter of biodegradable oil, which is being closely monitored.

Mr Black asked ONR and SEPA how they could be sure that the leak would not get worse if the source of the leak was presently unknown. Mr Hammond explained that this was first noticed in August when an engineer considered the top up rates to be higher than expected. The line has been walked and opened up and looked at, but nothing has been found. The splitter box has also been examined with no trace of leak. A specialist contractor is now being brought in. Mr Hammond re-emphasised that the oil is biodegradable. Mr Black asked what the implications would be if the leak worsened, and the transformer had to come offline. Mr Struthers replied that Reactor 4 transformer is suitable for the whole site and the redundant transformers are a form of backup. He added that it is not normal for a leak to occur, and any leak is too much, but it is not unknown in the industry and unlikely to be catastrophic. The team has been briefed and is prepared.

Mr Black asked how the Station would ensure focus on retaining plant in good condition and not a big list of leaks. Mr Struthers confirmed that configuration control and maintenance regimes are the main focus at Hunterston B. He added that the Station has to maintain the plant in a safe state and has adequate spares and a planned maintenance schedule.

Mr Black asked how prepared Hunterston B is for the scenario of grid towers not being available. He noted that there is a big risk of unplanned outages and there could be a scenario when power is lost for days. Mr Struthers responded that the risk is reduced when shut down. The Station has backups and fuel stocks and liaises with the National Grid. The energy crisis is being closely watched and backup requirements are in place. Mr Fannin reminded members that the Reactors being shut down reduces the cooling requirements and therefore the risk. A “black start” is for operating sites and has been considered by ONR and EDF. Mr Black further asked if the Station was comfortable that it would be okay if there was no grid electricity available for six weeks. Mr Struthers confirmed this was the case and fuel would be prioritised, if necessary, over an extended period. Mr Black asked if ONR was confident that Hunterston B would not be at risk if there was no power, which Mr Fannin confirmed.

Cllr Murdoch asked if there was a contingency plan for maintaining fuel stocks and what would happen if there were no stocks available, as in Mr Black’s scenario. Mr Struthers advised that the Station had worked closely with BEIS to get what was needed for critical infrastructure in place. He added that BEIS is responsible for the Critical National Infrastructure – hospitals, nuclear, etc. Cllr Murdoch asked what would happen if there was no power for 12 months rather than six weeks. Mr Fannin confirmed that there is still a contingency plan.

Mr Buckley asked if there were additional issues to be addressed before the safety cases could be approved. Mr Fannin confirmed that ONR was satisfied that the hazard presented was not a significant risk and asked for further detailed analysis. Mr Buckley asked if that situation was not covered anyway. Mr Fannin explained that there is fuel string with a fuel plug on top. The string acts as a shock absorber if dropped. In defueling, there is no shock absorber. It took some time for EDF to demonstrate this case.

Mrs Holmes observed that the Site Directors have a great responsibility which is not made any easier by mistakes being made but it is inevitable in a place with complex systems. She noted that not one person knows everything there is to know but she is reassured by the good, highly trained and qualified staff, with the support of the regulators. She asked if Contractors could pose any problems and if they are subject to audit. Mr Fannin clarified that regulators expect the same standards whether carried out by a Contractor or employee. Contractors can be highly specialised and need to have the right oversight and risk assessments, method statements, etc. ONR is convinced that there are robust oversight processes in place. The ‘Big 6’ Contractors are treated the same as EDF employees. Mrs Holmes noted that the crux is getting the calibre of contractor person.

Mrs Holmes referred to the tritium leak in the outfall lagoon in February and asked where this is sited. Mr Struthers clarified that this is on the right-hand side if driving towards the site. Mrs Holmes asked if the pipe goes from the lagoon to sea water. Mr Struthers replied that it is a landward and seaward lagoon with two barriers before it reaches the sea. Mrs Holmes noted that the oil was dealt with and sent to the right place to be treated but asked if there was any residual. Mr Struthers confirmed that the Station is continuing to monitor this. Oil from the leak was removed, processed, packaged, analysed and sent for disposal through the normal routes. Mr Black asked when a conclusion is expected. Mr Hammond advised that SEPA has received the Station’s report and is considering this with the evidence gathered but he could not give a timescale for response. Mr Black was concerned that this should not have happened and there should be more pressure to learn fast as tritium is a nasty substance. Mr Hammond advised that the actual pipes that leaked have been moved above ground so they can be monitored more effectively, and a repeat of the event was considered unlikely. Mr Black asked if there had been digest summaries. Mr Hammond replied that there is an understanding of what caused the leak and the Station is taking action to correct this.

It is unlikely to occur again, but SEPA is considering the action to be taken as a result of this. Mr Black was of the opinion that SEPA appeared to be less diligent than ONR with no transparency and no timescales for reporting. Mr Hammond responded that SEPA needs to consider the appropriate enforcement action and he is unable to give details in a public forum which could influence the decision on enforcement action being taken. He added that organisational management arrangements are underway. Mr Black asked what would happen if the same thing happened again and saw enforcement as being for the regulators but there is a missing tier in the middle. Mrs Holmes commented that site visits can assist with the understanding of detail and offsite communications with Site Directors. Mr Dale added that details will be publicly available once the investigations are complete, but investigations cannot be compromised by putting information in the public domain at this stage. Remedial action can be taken by the site. Mr Black described his personal experience where he experienced a serious injury, from an accident similar to one which had happened previously. Mr Dale advised that SEPA's regulatory actions are available on its website. Previous incidents are taken into account and if the site has not learned lessons from these, the enforcement action increases. He reiterated that SEPA is unable to comment further until the process is complete. Mr Black added that he had not seen anything in previous Minutes to say that action had been taken and there would be no repeat of incidents. Mr Struthers assured members that highest level investigations are undertaken, previous incidents are looked at, findings are shared across the EDF fleet, and more training is implemented. He added that all pipework overground has been replaced and EDF had responded to the need to ensure that there would be no repeat of the incident, for which Mr Struthers is ultimately responsible.

Mrs Holmes referred to the concrete blocks on Peel Ports land and asked if there had been problems as she noted that the gate is now closed. Mr Struthers was unable to comment on Peel Ports issues.

Mrs Holmes noted that the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) was not present and would have liked to ask about the newspaper article on harassment that she was dismayed to read.

Mrs Holmes noted that the proposed consultation on the decommissioning of Hunterston B is scheduled for September. She recalled that there was a full and detailed consultation on Hunterston A site and expected to see the same from Hunterston B. She asked that the Site Stakeholder Group is kept informed at an early stage. She noted that ONR will be consulted and have sight of the EIADR Scoping Report in July and asked if this also applied to the community and Site Stakeholder Group. She noted the EIADR application is expected in Quarter 3 of 2023 and asked if the decision is solely ONR's or if North Ayrshire Council, SEPA and the community will have the opportunity to input. Mr Fannin responded that the pre-application opinion defines the level of consultation required. The Site Stakeholder Group will be consulted as an important stakeholder. Mrs Holmes found that consultations can sometimes be very bland with no detail and would like the Site Stakeholder Group to receive the technical detail. Cllr Murdoch added that the understanding and knowledge of the public should not be underestimated.

Mrs Holmes commented that since she joined the Site Stakeholder Group in 2006, she might have appeared to give the Site Directors a hard time in terms of questioning, but she was very impressed by the work and the running of both Stations.

Mr Lamb referred to North Ayrshire Council's Consequence Report on revised offsite regulations and asked if the existing regulations would remain in place until the end of defueling. Mr Struthers replied that the Station would work through the process and provide the technical detail to advise North Ayrshire Council. This is not a decision for EDF and the process is underway, with no conclusion reached yet. Mr Lamb asked if this was based purely on generation. Mr Struthers clarified that it is based on risk. There is still some risk as there is still fuel on site but the risk is reduced. The Station is going through the review at the current time and ONR is also involved.

Mr Lamb asked for updates to be given at future meetings. Mr Fannin added that REPIIR (Radiation ((Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations) has recently been updated and ONR will also take account of HECA (Hazard Evaluation Consequence Assessment) to ensure that the Report contains the right information and amount of detail. ONR will support the submission of the Consequence Report to North Ayrshire Council. There is no change to offsite emergency arrangements at this time. A more substantial change is likely to be the removal of potassium iodate tablets.

## 5. Hunterston A Site Reports

### Hunterston A Reports – Mr Mark Blackley

The Hunterston A report issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Mr Blackley highlighted the key points as being safety, delivery and people. Covid arrangements on site have ended. Conventional safety performance has been good. There were no significant injuries during 2021/22 or radiological, nuclear safety or security events. Mr Blackley described an environmental event where a small hole (approx. 40-50mm and 10-15mm), caused by corrosion, was discovered after the filtration but before the sampling system in a ventilation stack. This made the stack discharge 0.3% higher but there is no tangible difference to the SEPA returns. SEPA Inspectors will visit the site the following week. The site ended the financial year on a strong basis. Seventy-one tons of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) was removed from the final bunker. It is anticipated that the bunker will be empty by late summer. The Learning and Development Centre has been demolished. A new Effluent Treatment Plant has been installed and welfare facilities have been improved. Sixty-four resource requests were filled, either internally, by recruitment or by conversion from external agencies to Magnox employees. A key focus is on four new Health Physics Trainees who start in June and two Craft Apprentices. This is particularly pleasing as there have been none for a number of years.

### Members Question and Answer Session

Mr Black asked more about the hole being after the filtration system. Mr Blackley advised that it was as a result of corrosion and could have been anywhere. The stacks are inspected at ground level annually, but this was the first time they had been inspected from an elevated position. It is known that the hole was not there in 2018.

Mr Lamb referred to the demolition of the Learning and Development Centre and asked if the contamination was easy to clean up. Mr Blackley replied that this had not been done yet as the building was demolished first. Land quality experts are examining the land now to determine the best way forward.

Mr Lamb asked about the configuration of the new Effluent Treatment plant on site. Mr Blackley responded that this is for miscellaneous waste such as water from showers. New bowsers will transfer from different locations on site to the treatment plant.

Mr Lamb assumed that intermediate level waste retrieval from the ponds went by flasks to the ILW store. Mr Blackley replied that the ILW flask from the pond is used to load the waste into the bunkers and then the waste is processed through the SAWBR facility. We are not planning on using this flask again. Mr Phillips added that the metal from the flask will be recycled. Mr Lamb further asked if there had been concrete fines from the ponds. Mr Phillips advised that there was debris from fuel processing and the bunkers.

Mr Lamb asked if the cladding project was still progressing. Mr Blackley advised that this is on hold, pending a decision on the strategy for the site, which is currently care and maintenance. If the site carries on with the present care and maintenance programme, re-cladding will be necessary, but this might not be the case for continuous decommissioning. A decision on this is

anticipated in 12 months.

Mrs Holmes envisaged that holes in stacks will become more frequent as decommissioning progresses and more stacks are required. Mr Phillips advised that there will be discharges from the ILW store, from the Encapsulation Plant and from the Reactor buildings.

Mrs Holmes noted that Hunterston B will start decommissioning in the next three years and asked if there would be more discharge stacks and if the community would see more aerial discharge. Mr Hammond responded that this would depend on what Magnox and EDF decide to do. There are currently limits and generally a downward trend is seen in gaseous discharges. Mr Blackley replied that there will be additional stacks, but the discharges are very small and within authorisation limits. He added that discharges are much lower than would be expected from a generating station. Referring to the EIADR Scoping Report, Mrs Holmes asked if this would include aerial discharges and if Hunterston A and Hunterston B would be separate. Mr Blackley advised that there would be rebalancing of discharge between the different stacks.

Mrs Holmes asked if there were 27 column bases in total or if some had not required repair. Mr Blackley responded that these were the ones requiring remedial work.

Mrs Holmes noted that everyone was waiting to hear what the NDA decides is the way forward and whether the reactor buildings will be taken down. She asked if this decision would really be known within a year. Mr Blackley advised that the Business Case has gone through internal review. It needs to go through NDA processes and then to the UK Government. He has been briefed that it is anticipated that this will happen this summer, but it all depends on Government priorities. Mrs Holmes asked if the Scottish Government will be consulted on this. Ms Hamilton replied that stakeholder engagement is in the workstream, and she will advise further in due course.

Mr Lamb asked if Hunterston A and Magnox had come to an agreement on the higher activity waste in bunker one. Mr Blackley responded that the strategy document for all Magnox stations takes account of all requirements. Hunterston A is based on small item debris which it is assumed could not be separated. The Company-wide strategy document is being revisited. Once this has been agreed within the business, the NDA and Regulators will be consulted on dealing with the fuel elements, before going to Magnox Senior Strategy Group. When the Strategy is agreed, it would have to be implemented, with engagement with regulators, approval of any permissions required, modifications, etc. Mr Black asked what would happen if approval of the strategy takes longer than the anticipated completion of bunker one. Mr Blackley advised that the waste would be kept safe until the new strategy has been agreed.

Mr Black asked if there would be detailed consultation on the colour of the cladding, if required. Mr Blackley confirmed that this would be the case.

## **6. Update from Scottish Government – Ms Diane Hamilton, Ms Laura Hogg**

The Scottish Government report, circulated with the meeting papers, was taken as read. Ms Hamilton confirmed that the next Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting will take place virtually on 23 August 2022 at 2.00pm. The Minister for Environment and Land Reform, Mairi McAllan MSP, is expected to be in attendance.

[Action - Any questions for discussion at the meeting should be sent to the Secretariat for collation and forwarding to the Scottish Government by 1 July 2022.](#)

A response to the review on the Radioactive Substances Common Framework is expected from

the UK Government in summer 2022.

The Scottish Higher Activity Waste workplan is being prepared. Laura Hogg has been seconded to the Scottish Government from NDA and Scottish Government is pleased to have Laura's technical expertise on board.

Ms Hogg confirmed that she had been seconded to Scottish Government for six months. She has worked in the industry for almost 20 years and been in almost every decommissioning site in the UK.

*The Chair apologised for bypassing the Hunterston A Station ONR and SEPA reports on the agenda and returned to these.*

### **ONR Report**

Mr Fannin gave a brief summary of the ONR report prepared by Bill Kings before his retirement. Two control inspections under Licence Condition 11 and Licence Condition 17 were graded green – no formal action. A fire inspection was also rated green. Mr Fannin referred to the Solid Intermediate Level Waste Encapsulation (SILWE) plant and risk assessments and fire evacuation routes in the SILWE plant in active commissioning. Mr Kings was happy with the way that the site had managed Covid arrangements, which were gradually relaxed and now back to normal working practices. Mr Fannin confirmed that he had taken over as ONR Inspector for Hunterston A on 5 April 2022. The main reason for agreeing to take both Hunterston A and B sites is the Government decision to transfer Hunterston B Station to Magnox. It is still to be determined if Hunterston will become a single or double licenced site. There is a lot of synergy between the two sites and Mr Fannin will work closely with Mr Alistair Walker, Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors (AGR) Programme Delivery Manager for Magnox.

### **SEPA Report –**

SEPA's report on Hunterston A was circulated with the meeting papers. Ms Hayes was not present at the meeting, but Mr Hammond offered to take back any questions.

## **7. NDA Reports – Mr David Wallace**

Mr Wallace confirmed that the secondment of Ms Hogg to Scottish Government was the result of stakeholder feedback, demonstrating NDA's commitment to enhancing relationships and resources with Scottish Government, regulators, etc. The NDA's role is that of technical advice and guidance so it appropriate that Ms Hogg should be seconded and is an example of closer working and helping to inform policy. This will be reviewed in six months. Mr Wallace reiterated that the NDA does listen and finds it useful to hear the views of Site Stakeholder Groups and was keen to report back on progress.

Coming out of Covid, there is no longer an expectation from Government to be in the office 5 days per week and a flexible, hybrid approach to working is expected, with 2/3 days a week in the office. The NDA's Sustainability Strategy was published in March and is available on the website. Magnox fuel reprocessing ends at Sellafield in July 2022, ending an operational journey that began in 1964. 55,000 tons of spent fuel has been processed. The Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) Siting Process is underway, with geophysical surveys (sonar surveys of deep rock) to begin in Cumbria. The Supply Chain Event will take place on 21 July 2022 in Telford, which is expected to be the largest ever with over 300 suppliers and 1,700 visitors. The Awards Ceremony will take place the same day. The NDA Stakeholder Summit will be in person in Edinburgh on 7/8 September. The agenda is being prepared and a Scottish Government Minister will give the keynote speech. There will be panel discussions instead of workshops to allow for full involvement with stakeholders.

The Gender Pay Gap 2020/21 Report has been published and is available on the website. The NDA is doing its best to reduce the pay gap and is still looking for improvement as it is important to attract and retain a diverse workforce.

### **Members Question and Answer Session**

Mr Black asked how the relationship between NDA and Magnox would be monitored. He had read the AGR Operating Policy Report and asked if there was any update on this. Mr Wallace replied that the National Audit Office report sees BEIS, NDA and Magnox working together. The National Audit Office is looking at the value for money aspect in how the organisations work together. The main thrust is closer working with Magnox and EDF through a process with an integrated team put together. The NDA is not intending to wait three years and wants to see a seamless transfer. Mr Black pointed out that this should not just relate to safety but should also have community input. Mr Wallace advised that Mr Walker is part of the Future Missions Team. An updated report is being prepared on how the partnership is working together instead of individual feedback. Mr Walker added that EDF generated key metrics and learning is being developed to bring similar into the AGR programme. Mr Lamb asked the Scottish Government's view on this and noted the importance of keeping pushing forward from a community aspect. Mr Wallace responded that the future is exciting in Scotland, with Scotland being very important for decommissioning with Hunterston B, Vulcan Dounreay and Torness. He stressed that decommissioning is not the end but the beginning and there is an opportunity for this area to be a lead and share learning with the rest of the estate and globally. This also relates to socio economics and the skills agenda. Ms Hamilton added that an Energy Strategy refresh is in the pipeline and being considered. Mr Fannin added that while he fully understood the NDA consulting with stakeholders, it needed to include the regulators in this consultation and the ONR is not happy with the current level of engagement. Mr Fannin clarified that ONR is an independent regulator, which operates without fear or favour.

Mr Black asked how the ONR knew that it was working. Mr Dale explained the full scope of the regulations for regulators. Mr Black asked how the public knew that it was working well. Mrs Holmes thought that perhaps lack of progress would be an indicator.

Mrs Holmes noted that Hunterston A, Hunterston B and Torness will be subject to 'near site near surface' disposal of higher activity waste. The NDA's wish to have a store at Hunterston for central and southern Scotland was rejected. Trust has been built up between the NDA and Stations so far but now the NDA is a huge Company and Hunterston is in a vulnerable area. Hunterston is glad of the jobs but does not want to host other stations' waste. Cllr Murdoch asked why this decision would be revisited if it had already been made. This would bring into question public confidence in the integrity of this forum. Mrs Holmes noted that Scottish Government is not involved in the GDF discussions in Cumbria and asked if Scottish Government has a say. Ms Hamilton advised that Scottish Government meets monthly with Radioactive Waste Management Ltd and Marine Scotland. Scottish Government is not involved in the decision making but is being briefed and kept informed.

### **8. Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business raised.

### **9. Next Meeting – Thursday 1 September 2022**

The Chair thanked everyone for turning up in person and was pleased to see people again face to



face. She brought the meeting to a close at 3.21 pm.