

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

Present

Magnox Ltd

Mr Mark Blackley (Site Director, Hunterston A)
Mrs Jill Callander (SSG Secretariat)
Mr Bill Hamilton (Comms and Stakeholder Relations Director)
Mr Colin Hargreaves (Independent Site Inspector)
Mr Sean Marshall (Magnox Communications)
Mr Andy McDade (Trade Union Rep, Hunterston A)
Mr Reuben Phillips (Waste Manager, Hunterston A)
Mr Alistair Walker (Programme Delivery Manager)

EDF (Hunterston B)

Mr Andy Dalling (Transfer and Deconstruction
Preparation Manager)
Ms Fiona McCall (External Comms)
Mr Stuart McGhie (SSG Vice Chair)
Mr Joe Struthers (Station Director)

ONR

Community Council Representatives

Mr Jamie Black (Largs CC)
Ms Helen Boyle (Skelmorlie CC)
Mrs Rita Holmes – SSG Chair (Fairlie CC)
Mr John Lamb (West Kilbride CC)
Mr John McHenery (Cumbrae CC)

SEPA

Mr Stewart Ballantine (Hunterston A)
Mr Keith Hammond (Hunterston B)

Scottish Government

Ms Diane Hamilton

North Ayrshire Council (NAC)

Mr Stewart Mackenzie (Protective Services)

Police Scotland

Inspector Stuart Dougan

NDA

Mr David Wallace (Stakeholder Lead Scotland)

Hunterston Estate

Mr Angus Cochran-Patrick

In Attendance

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

Mr Alan Holden (Member of Public)
Mr David Nairn (Member of Public)

Apologies

Ms Clare Bond (Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM))
Cllr Todd Ferguson (North Coast)
Mr Stuart Fannin (SEPA)
Cllr John Glover (Kilwinning)
Ms Melanie Hayes (SEPA)
Cllr Alan Hill (North Coast)
Cllr Tom Marshall (North Coast)
Cllr Ian Murdoch (North Coast)

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks and Declarations of Interest

Mrs Holmes, Chair, welcomed everyone to the sixty fifth meeting of the Hunterston Site

Stakeholder Group in the Waterside Hotel, **West** Kilbride.

Mrs Holmes updated on the elections for Chair and Vice Chair at the Housekeeping meeting that morning, at which she was re-elected as Chair and Mr Stuart McGhie re-elected as Vice Chair, for a further four year period.

The Chair read out the apologies as listed above. She welcomed Mr Stewart Ballantine, Radioactive Substances Manager – Decommissioning, SEPA, on behalf of Melanie Hayes, who was on leave. She also welcomed Inspector Stuart Dougan who replaces Inspector Allan Wilson as the representative of Police Scotland.

Introductions were made around the table. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Chair and Vice Chair Updates and Correspondence

Since the meeting in June 2022, the Chair and Vice Chair had attended the SSG Chairs and Vice Chairs annual meeting in Manchester and NDA Executive Board on 4 July 2022. They participated in the virtual Scottish Nuclear Sites Stakeholder Group meeting on 23 August and the Scottish Government Just Transition online meeting on 24 August, the latter being a frustrating experience due to online limitations. The Chair had also attended part of a Socio Economic Update meeting online the previous day and invited Mr Hamilton to say more on this.

Mrs Holmes summarised the speakers and the updates given at the meeting in Manchester, following which there was a Question and Answer session and round table session with updates from the Site Stakeholder Group Chairs and Vice Chairs. The Chair and Vice Chair were pleased to report on good regular communication between the Site Directors at Hunterston A and B and the Site Stakeholder Group and also emphasised their trust in the regulators, ONR and SEPA, and their respect for the workforce and management of both sites and an acknowledgment of the difficult tasks involved in decommissioning. The Chair and Vice Chair had stated the Site Stakeholder Group's main concerns as being:

- (1) Ensuring that Hunterston A's radioactive waste was being treated and stored using the options that safeguarded and benefited local people, workers and the environment.
- (2) Ensuring that Hunterston did not become the regional store for radioactive waste from elsewhere.
- (3) Pushing for the NDA Strategy to incorporate continuous decommissioning of Hunterston A, so as to maintain jobs and skills.
- (4) Ensuring that the amenity and unique beauty of the area and its local communities are not sacrificed to exploitative companies.

Mrs Holmes was concerned about the conflict of interest issue in having a private landowning Company also being Port Authority for the Clyde. As landowners they could delay or veto developments in the interests of the private Company rather than considering developments which could provide jobs as well as enhance, rather than damage, the area. She gave Ardrossan Harbour as an example of where this has happened and where the NDA, for the best of motives, contributed funding to its development and she asked the NDA to be vigilant to what is happening as the communities feel vulnerable.

The general lack of skilled workers, and in particular skilled workers with a radiation protection background has been discussed at every meeting regarding the future and was also discussed at the Scottish Government's Just Transition virtual workshop by Magnox. Frustration was expressed at the slow progress with Kilwinning College, which will contribute to skills training. The Scottish Government was asked if funding could be made available for young people to enrol on suitable courses at Colleges or Universities which would be appropriate for joining a decommissioning workforce.

Mrs Holmes stressed that the Site Stakeholder Group does not want Hunterston A going into Care and Maintenance for the next 70 years and the importance of the NDA ensuring that Continuous Decommissioning is the strategy for Hunterston. Mrs Holmes hoped that with the imminent decommissioning of the Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors at Hunterston B station, that the NDA would see the benefits of continuous decommissioning at Hunterston A.

At the Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting on 23 August, the Chair was pleased to hear that there is now a plan to deal with the problematic radioactive resins from the submarine programme. These will be treated by a specialist company at Winfrith before being taken to a low level waste repository in Cumbria. Captain Coffey was asked for a future presentation on the Faslane Support Hub. The Chair and Vice Chair appreciated the Scottish Government hosting these meetings. They will also be attending the NDA Annual Summit in Edinburgh on 7-8 September.

3. Actions and Approval of Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the Site Stakeholder Group meeting, held on 1 June 2022, were proposed for approval by Mr John Lamb and seconded by Mr Jamie Black.

Update on Actions:

- 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. Mrs Callander advised that the employee involved has since left the Council and the report had been circulated by email. Members should send any questions on the report to the Secretariat for collation.
- Any questions for discussion at the Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting on 23 August should be sent to the Secretariat for collation and forwarding to the Scottish Government by 1 July 2022. Ms Hamilton advised that responses to any questions will be forwarded in writing and it is hoped that the Minister will be able to attend the next Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting.

4. Hunterston B Station Reports

Hunterston B Report – Mr Joe Struthers

The report issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Defueling activity is progressing well with the focus on an operational defueling campaign on Reactor 3. Andy Dalling is leading the team on early deconstruction preparations. Safety performance remains good and the Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) sits at zero. In July, a safety document was marked complete without a section of pipework being reconnected on the Reactor 4 Main Gas Relief Valves. Although there was no actual safety consequence, the highest level of investigation was carried out to understand the causes and learn from it. Work was subsequently completed to reconnect the pipework and tested appropriately. Under Environmental Safety, a transformer cable has been taken out of service following a slow low-level oil leak. A tracer has been placed to allow detection and repairs will be undertaken when the leak site has been identified. Under Emergency Arrangements, two demonstrations were completed, which included security and the first exercise to be run on a defueling site, which was a valuable learning experience. An Action Plan is being prepared, in conjunction with the Regulator and further demonstrations will take place later in the year. Mr Struthers was very pleased to accept the 'Exceptional Contribution to the Energy Security' award, on behalf of all staff at Hunterston, at the Scottish Engineering Awards in Glasgow.

ONR Report –

The ONR report for April-June 2022 issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Mr Fannin was not present at the meeting.

SEPA Report – Mr Keith Hammond

The report issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Mr Hammond highlighted key points. SEPA has appointed Nicole Paterson as Chief Executive Officer from October 2022. On 23 August, an inspection on the longstanding manhole refurbishment programme was carried out. Improvement actions taken since the radioactive oil loss event in February were also followed up. A final warning letter was issued on 22 June. Meetings have been held with the Deconstruction Activity Team. A Notice of Variation was issued on 29 July 2022 in respect of the receipt of radioactive waste in the form of debris in incoming fuel transport flasks.

Members Question and Answer Session

Mr Cochran-Patrick had missed the last meeting and asked more about the radioactive oil leak. Mr Hammond confirmed that the oil was collected in a lagoon and did not go into the sea. This has since gone through waste streams and been cleaned up.

Mr Black referred to the 'not adequate' rating in the ONR Report in respect of the annual LC11 demonstration exercise and felt that Mr Struthers glossed over this in his report and the reporting between site and regulators is inconsistent. Mr Struthers clarified that this was a positive learning experience from which Action Plans have been produced. The categorisation is up to the regulator. ONR only has two ratings – 'adequate' or 'not adequate'.

Mr Black asked if the report on the investigation into the leak of radioactively contaminated oil, concluded on 22 August 2022, was publicly available. Mr Hammond will take advice on this and if it is not regarded as commercially sensitive, he will arrange for circulation to Site Stakeholder Group members through the Secretariat.

[Action – Mr Hammond to arrange circulation of the SEPA report on the leak of radioactively contaminated oil through the Secretariat, if there are no sensitivity restrictions on doing so.](#)

Mrs Holmes asked if there were conditions attached to the Notice of Variation issued in respect of debris in the fuel transport flasks. Mr Hammond responded that the fuel had to be removed using Best Practical Means to Sellafield. The reporting has been changed so that the same thing is not being reported every month.

Mrs Holmes noted the summary of progress of defueling and decommissioning in the series of pop-up banners on display in the room and asked about the public consultation. Mr Struthers confirmed that the public consultation was launched on 8 August and had visited Millport, Fairlie, Largs and West Kilbride. Booklets can be provided to anyone who would like them. Based on the comments received during this round of consultation, a further consultation period will be undertaken in Spring 2023, and Mr Struthers encouraged feedback through the consultation process. Mrs Holmes considered that EDF could not have done more to advertise and consult on the process but asked why NDA was not involved. Mr Struthers confirmed that the consultation is his responsibility as Station Director and NDA are not involved at this point. He assured members however that EDF is working closely with Magnox and the NDA.

Mr Black asked how the partnership will work in the future and ensure that there is a smooth transition. Mr Wallace clarified that EDF has a statutory responsibility to consult which does not involve Magnox and the NDA. Mr Walker added that the content of the pop-up display boards emanated from a Decommissioning Report and Magnox have had sight of these.

Mrs Holmes asked about the transportation of waste when NDA takes over the EDF site. Mr Wallace advised that NDA is involved in the transportation of waste and has been involved in this process throughout.

Mr Lamb noted that active defueling is underway and asked how much defueling had been achieved. Mr Struthers confirmed that good progress is being made and he will include statistics in future reports.

[Action – Joe Struthers to include defueling statistics in his reports going forward.](#)

Public Forum

Member of the Public A had emailed regarding the tritium oil leak and thanked SEPA for the prompt response. They understood that the contaminated oil did not go into the sea, which Member of the Public A believed did in 2016, and that there are procedures in place to ensure that this does not happen again and asked what these procedures are. They asked if there is an age related issue and what is happening about spent fuel rods. They were appreciative of the people undertaking the hazardous Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) retrieval work. Mr Hammond confirmed that the processes involve tracking and management work. Previously some work was not being done through the waste management system but all work is now being done through an approved waste management system and this will be kept under observation by SEPA.

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 reiterated that the current strategy for Hunterston A is Care and Maintenance till 2030. The proposed new Continuous Decommissioning Strategy is still with the UK Government for decision. Safety performance has generally been good and there have been no security or radiological events. A revision to the site's Security Plan has been made and approved by the Regulator. A small hole in one of the site's authorised gaseous discharge stacks, caused by corrosion, which was reported at the last meeting, has since been investigated and repaired. SEPA has issued a Warning Letter for failure to comply with all the conditions of the permit. Another hole in the stack was found and an Action and Improvement Plan were produced and work done to remove the holes and rust. With regard to fuel elements, in Bunker 1 particularly, fuel elements have been stored securely in the bunker and in the past were sent to Sellafield. Now that Sellafield is no longer reprocessing, an alternative is required and the site is working through an Options Assessment. The site will also engage with the Regulators before making a decision. Waste retrieval from bunkers has gone very well with 244 3M³ boxes exported to the ILW store. It is evident that there is more than anticipated and it is now forecast that work will be completed by the end of the calendar year. Arrangements are ongoing for the Solid Intermediate Level Waste Encapsulation (SILWE) plant. A magnet screen left as a legacy waste item has been successfully retrieved to a Solid Active Waste Bunker Retrieval (SAWBR) box. Hunterston A site is collaborating with EDF and Magnox for a seamless transfer and transition, an example of which was the recent workshop. Difficulties are still being experienced in recruiting certain roles. Mr Blackley was pleased to report that three of the four Radioactivity Protection Monitor trainees had started. Two Maintenance Apprentices will start the following week. Mr Blackley reminded members about the offer of a site tour / familiarisation visit, which had been arranged for 14 September 2022. Anyone wishing to attend should confirm their attendance with the Secretariat as soon as possible.

ONR Report –

The ONR report for April-June 2022 issued with the meeting papers was taken as read. Mr Fannin was not present at the meeting.

SEPA Report – Mr Stewart Ballantine

A written report had been issued with the meeting papers and was taken as read. On behalf of Ms Hayes, who was on annual leave, Mr Ballantine confirmed that a Warning letter had been issued in respect of the hole in the stack and SEPA was aware that two additional holes had been found. An Optioneering report had been produced on the solid waste bunkers and specialised contractors had been engaged.

Members Question and Answer Session

Mrs Holmes asked about the Deconstruction programme of roof remedial repairs and asked if surveys had been done to rule out contamination. Mr Blackley confirmed that contamination had been ruled out and the work involved internal steelwork. Additional radioactivity surveys had been done prior to work being done to give people reassurance. Mrs Holmes noted that the photo in the report had no dimensions. Mr Blackley clarified that the measurement was approximately 1m x 1m.

Mr Lamb asked about progress on the temporary weather banner. He noted that a decision was awaited on a rolling programme of decommissioning and asked if a weather barrier would be required for Care and Maintenance to last 50 years. Mr Blackley confirmed that the solution would be different if the decision is made to dismantle. Mr Lamb asked if the planning permission granted had now expired. Mr Blackley will check this and let Mr Lamb know.

[Action – Mr Blackley to check and advise Site Stakeholder Group members if planning permission for weather envelope has expired.](#)

Mr Lamb asked how structurally sound the roof is, how long it will last and how safe it is. Mr Blackley responded that the roof is structurally sound but it leaks. There are no structural concerns but action is being taken to make it waterproof and watertight. He reassured members that the site has a robust programme of civil inspections on all structures on site, not just roofs.

Mrs Holmes asked if the new Occupational Health Medical Officer is a new post or a replacement. Mr Blackley confirmed that it is a replacement.

Public Forum

Member of the Public A asked if it was policy that spent fuel goes to Sellafield. Mrs Holmes clarified that the reprocessing plant at Sellafield has now closed and fuel is currently safely isolated in a vault for the site to decide. Mr Blackley clarified that this is different to the fuel from Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors at Hunterston B station. Magnox fuel is the subject of optioneering on what to do now as historically it would have gone to Sellafield for reprocessing. He confirmed that this only related to one and a bit elements. Member of the Public A asked that this be made clearer in future. Mr McHenery asked who is responsible for a fuel element and a bit going into a bunker. Mr Blackley explained that this would have happened when the plant was operational between the 1960s-1990s. Mr McHenery asked if steps had been taken to ensure that this cannot be repeated. Mr Phillips confirmed that this could not recur as the site is not operational. Mrs Holmes noted that things have happened in the past but there is more openness and transparency now. Mr McDade added that there is no way of knowing now how this had happened. Mr Phillips added that the

Solid Active Waste Bunker Retrieval (SAWBR) plant had been designed with the expectation that there would be finds which could be dealt with.

6. Update from Magnox – Mr Bill Hamilton

Mr Hamilton gave a powerpoint presentation for the first time. A pre-publication meeting has been held with NDA Director of Socio Economics, Jamie Reed. Consultants were hired to undertake a study across the NDA estate to answer questions asked years ago on the impact of socio economics across the UK. The study undertaken 3-4 years ago looked at the value of money spent and the impact on the local supply chain, non local, workers and the local economy across the Magnox estate, Sellafield and Dounreay.

Wylfa has a high level of staffing working on decommissioning. Changes have been made at Bradwell. The Decommissioning Programme has peaks and troughs and the future will see a rolling programme. Magnox has prepared a costed Business Plan which is with the UK Government. Permission will either be given for the whole programme or not given, it will not just be selected sites. Consultation will take place on what it means for each site. The Site Stakeholder Group Report Autumn 2022 is a brief, more corporate update. Regeneration of sites has gone from 12 to at least 20. Employee numbers have gone from under 3k to over 6k. The budget has increased from £500million to £1billion. A Future Missions team has been created. With regard to external communications, a new Site Stakeholder Group website has been created. Employees are being engaged with through surveys. Under delivery, there is a spotlight on asbestos and a series of major projects to deal with. The Magnox Socio Economic Scheme has been running for ten years.

Members Question and Answer Session

Mr Black referred to the Government decision awaited on the Continuous Decommissioning Strategy and asked if there was any way that the Site Stakeholder Group could influence the process to make the decision-making quicker. He asked if it would be possible to invite the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to a Site Stakeholder Group meeting and ask it to apply some pressure. Mr Hamilton replied that Magnox and the NDA could discuss this and perhaps the Scottish Government could influence the timing of the decision. He expected a decision to be made this side of Christmas and thought that the delay had been due to other priorities such as the war in Ukraine and the change of Prime Minister. Mr Hamilton confirmed that a BEIS representative will be present at the NDA Summit. Mr Black asked what the Scottish Government's stated position on the proposed Strategy is. Ms Hamilton was unable to answer this. Mr Hamilton responded that the NDA's Strategy 5 was signed off by both Scottish Government and UK Ministers. Mr Wallace confirmed that NDA has been through the proposed strategy with Scottish Government and will continue to have dialogue.

Mr McDade observed the difficulties in recruiting new posts and retaining existing posts. He noted that the jobs once considered to be well-paying were no longer regarded as well-paying jobs.

Mrs Holmes asked if a meeting with NDA was likely to take 12 months. Mr Hamilton clarified that it will not take that long as there are big changes afoot for Magnox with a wide ranging engagement programme.

Mr Wallace thanked Mr Hamilton for the presentation. He noted the problems with asbestos and asked about Peel Ports land and the negatives, costs and losses. Mr Hamilton responded that Magnox can only be responsible for Magnox nuclear sites. He noted that radioactivity and nuclear are commonly mentioned as an issue but while asbestos is not usually mentioned, it is a major issue.

The Chair suggested a comfort break of 10 minutes from 2.50 pm – 3.00 pm.

Mr Cochran-Patrick left the meeting at 2.50 pm.

7. Update from NDA – Mr David Wallace

Mr Wallace reported that the NDA had not expected such a good response to its Stakeholder Summit, to be held in Edinburgh on 7-8 September. Registration had closed the previous week and there were expected to be 170 attendees, with 70 dinner guests. There will be panel sessions and presentations with stakeholders invited to sit on panels. There will be talks about processes, socio economics, transitions and questions from the floor. Mairi McAllan, Minister for Environment, Biodiversity and Land Reform, will give the keynote speech. Senior representatives from BEIS will be present and there will be the opportunity for networking. Mr Wallace undertook to keep the Site Stakeholder Group Chairs updated if places become free for other Site Stakeholder Group members to attend.

The NDA was heavily involved in the Just Transition workshop and was also disappointed that this was online and will feed back comments to Scottish Government.

8. Update from Scottish Government – Ms Diane Hamilton

The Scottish Government report, circulated with the meeting papers, was taken as read. Ms Hamilton reported that NDA secondee, Laura Hogg, had updated at the Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting on the Higher Activity Waste Policy review. A programme of work for this is currently being developed, comprising specific workstreams. The Scottish Government is continuing to collaborate on the 'near site, near surface' concept, which is a high level and technical piece of work. The current work is investigative but will not make decisions. Outcomes of investigations are expected in July 2023.

Members Question and Answer Session

Mrs Holmes noted that she and Mr Lamb were heavily involved in the original work on the Scottish Higher Activity Waste Strategy and were keen to follow progress.

Mr Black asked if the Scottish Government has a stated policy on Care and Maintenance and Continued Decommissioning.

Action – Ms Hamilton will take this question back and provide a response through the Secretariat.

Mr Black further asked if the Scottish Government had given consideration to the use of Hunterston B site and asked what the options are.

Action – Ms Hamilton will take this question back and provide a response through the Secretariat.

Public Forum

Member of the Public B referred to Coastal Zone Management and Planning decisions and asked if the Site Stakeholder Group had considered opportunities to be represented on the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership. He noted that decisions made could have long-term implications for the Hunterston area. Mrs Holmes clarified that this is not within the Site Stakeholder Group's remit. Mr Hamilton added that the site will be a statutory consultee. Mr Wallace confirmed that the NDA is on the Strategic Group for Hunterston area. Mrs Holmes reiterated the Site Stakeholder Group's

appreciation of the NDA and Magnox's ethics and transparency. Mr Hamilton reassured members that Magnox and the NDA are mindful of things happening in the area.

Member of the Public A stated that long-term proposals for Hunterston site are causing concern. They asked if facilities at Hunterston A are able to accommodate the decommissioning requirements of Hunterston B.

They referred to and read part of an article from the Largs and Millport News on 17 August 2022. Mrs Holmes clarified that this article referred to a small amount of Intermediate Level Waste, not all waste or the treatment of decommissioning waste. Member of the Public A was concerned about the huge amount of radioactive waste that will be in the community and asked if there is an alternative. They were also concerned about tunnels being left in the sea bed and who is going to monitor this. Mrs Holmes responded that members of the community would have the opportunity to ask questions of the EDF at a meeting in Fairlie on Monday 5 September. She added that treatment and storage facilities are needed to be able to start decommissioning. Mr Struthers added that EDF is engaging early through consultation and will use feedback from this consultation exercise to inform the next consultation and address concerns. Mr Hamilton considered it to be great that fears and concerns are being brought to the table and pointed out that EDF is a long way from making decisions and is to be commended for starting engagement early. Mr McDade clarified that there will not be any more radioactivity in the area than is already here and decommissioning will reduce this. Mr Black referred back to Member of the Public A's question of "who will control this"?, he stated he understood that this would be Magnox, ONR, NDA, EDF and others round the table. Through the SSG forum he believed that there would be an opportunity to challenge and question them at meetings with evidence presented in reports and presentations given and questions can then be raised and reassured the Group he is more than willing to do this. This was welcomed by the Chair.

9. Any Other Business

There were no other items of business raised.

10. Next Meeting – Thursday 1 December 2022

The Chair thanked everyone attending and brought the meeting to a close at 3.25 pm.