

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SIZEWELL A & B STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM
FRIDAY 2ND OCTOBER 09:30**

Members

Marianne Fellowes
Pete Wilkinson
Trevor Branton
Cllr Jocelyn Bond
Martin Freeman
Joan Girling
Colin Tucker
Cllr Russell Rainger
Rachel Fulcher
Janet Fendley

Chair
Deputy Chair
Co-Opted Member
East Suffolk Council
Sizewell Residents Association
Co-Opted Member
Staff Rep EDF SZB
Suffolk County Council
Suffolk Coastal Friends of the Earth
Suffolk Coastal Friends of the Earth

Operators and Officers

Jill Callander
Tracey Finn
Deborah Ward
John McNamara
Jonathan Jenkin
Ian Cuthbert
Jon Yates
Peter Reynolds
Richard Lee
John Rogers
Niki Rousseau
Carolyn Barnes
Marjorie Barnes
Andrew Stone
Shannon Bowie-Wooler
Daniel Gregory
Kirsty Ramsden

Magnox
Magnox
SZA Communications
NDA
NDA
Magnox Site Director
EDF Site Director
SZA EA Inspector
SZB EA Inspector
SZA ONR Inspector
SZB Communications
East Suffolk Council
EDF New Build
Environment Agency
Minute Taker
SZB ONR Inspector
Magnox Communications Regional Lead

Members of the public

Mike Taylor
Jackum Brown
Jennifer Kirtley

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. CHAIR WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

4242 Marianne Fellowes welcomed the group to the meeting and thanked the NDA, Magnox and SSG Members for the support to their communities over the last difficult 7 months. This is the fourth SSG meeting in the country to take place via Zoom and the first for the Sizewell SSG.

Janine from Marick delivered housekeeping and how to use zoom for today's meeting.

1) Sizewell B Reports

a) Jon Yates (Acting Station Director)

4243 Jon highlighted recent changes in personnel at the Station, Robert Gunn has been appointed as Station Director. Jon will remain as the Acting Station Director until Robert has been fully inducted to the role. Jon will then resume his role as plant manager. Paul Morton, previous Station Director is now the Chief Nuclear Officer within the generation business.

4244 Safety Performance and staffing, there have been several challenges due to Covid and Jon was pleased to announce the following:

- No lost time injuries to staff
- No nuclear reportable incidents
- No environmental incidents
- Staff performed well and were focused on their work and safety was a paramount to ensure no injuries occurred during this period.
- 536 EDF staff which includes
 - 13 Apprentices
 - 6 Trainees
 - 2 industrial placements
 - 11 Visitor Centre staff
 - 250 year-round contractors
- 4 apprenticeships have passed out from their 4-year training, one apprentice was awarded the EDF Apprentice of the Year award.

4245 Station performance and National Grid, Sizewell returned to full power on 25 September following an agreement with National Grid to operate at 50% output as the demand for electricity had fallen significantly during the pandemic. On Saturday 22 August Sizewell B was automatically taken offline following an electric switchboard fault in a non-nuclear area of the power station. The reactor and turbine were automatically shut down. No issues, all post trip actions were carried out satisfactorily. Short investigation took place, found cause and following a review and the reactor was returned to service on Sunday 23 August. This is the first time this has happened in eight years and shows the world class performance of the reactor.

4246 Covid 19 Response, significant changes have been made to ensure the safety of staff including

- Reduction of footfall on site
- Formulation of a site pandemic working group
- Encourage home working and flexible working were possible and return to work when allowed by the government guidance.
- Carrying out risk assessments for all offices and buildings
- Maintaining a safe 2m distance, encouraging regular hand washing and enhanced onsite cleaning
- Introduce one-way system in all areas
- Staggered start times
- Using technology for onsite meetings wherever possible, and installation of heat detection cameras and testing.

Sizewell staff supported the local community where possible, such as working with pharmacies for prescription delivery and providing PPE to the NHS.

4247 Sizewell B application to the Environment Agency, application was made to change the permit for release Carbon-14 at the station. Jon confirmed that this change poses no risk to the health of the public and is still less than the recommended safe levels. Carbon-14 is released during the production of electricity and is released as Methane, Environment Agency are will make their decision following public consultation which closed on 1 October 2020.

4248 Relocated facilities at Sizewell B, planning application approved in September 2019, which was subject to judicial review, this was heard on 8 September 2020. We have heard late yesterday (1 October 2020) that the planning application was successful and was lawfully made. Sizewell will now review and plan a way forward.

Public consultation was held in August 2020, seeking feedback on the revised proposals summary of the scheme changes are:

- Pillbox field would remain a greenfield site, with some additional planting provided to reduce the environmental impact.
- The training centre would be reduced in height, so would be less visible in an area of natural beauty.
- Use of developed Sizewell A

This is progressing well, positive support of Sizewell A and NDA – very positive meeting took place yesterday about the finer details of the relocation. Preparing to submit a planning application to East Suffolk Council for the relocation of these facilities later in 2020.

Jon invited questions from the SSG and informed them that Colin Tucker and Gordon Pope were also on the call to support.

4249 Marianne Fellowes: I have some comments and I would like to ask a question regarding the performance and the electrical switchboard fault. In terms of the Carbon-14, I know the deadline was yesterday I am hopeful that we can submit comments following this meeting.

4250 Pete Wilkinson: The electricity demand reduction was not purely down to Covid, electricity demand has been falling for the last 10 years or so, it was 30% less than predictions made in 2008. Ironic on a site where a new site is being planned, has asked for a reduction. Is it fair for a letter from the Technical and Safety Manager which says that the change in discharge of Carbon-14 poses no threat to the public, when there is no evidence to support that when he knows there is a great deal of controversy over low level radiation and the effects at low doses on health? I am not suggesting there is a danger, it should be reflected in public statements. Uncertainties need to be investigated.

4251 Marianne Fellowes: When we come to Peter Reynolds, I would like him to speak and then bring Jon if needed. I do think we need to discuss the language that is used in publications, there is a slight difference in interpretation in the statements that have been made by EDF that it poses no threat, but if you increase poses no threat. The EA then state that they expect this to be mitigated, so that implies that there is some adverse impact and I read in the report that they exceeded these discharges in Jan, Feb, and Mar 2020.

4252 Trevor Branton: Which board was the fault on, and how did this cause the trip? You mentioned that the board was on a non-nuclear part of the plant, and how did this cause the reactor to shut down?

Jon Yates: The Reactor trip occurred during the return to service, of an uninterruptable power supply system. This is a battery backed system, we had carried out some maintenance on the batteries and the charger and we have a bypass loop around this, which supplies the power downstream to the charger and batteries and during the return to service of the unit, there was an error in the switching. We did not return the supply from the battery / charger to the line before opening the line on the bypass, this meant there was no power going downstream of the charger.

Trevor Branton: Which board was it on it?

Jon Yates: It was a PQM001, non-essential EDS board. However, the supplies from that board feed into control drive system and because those supplies were lost the control rods automatically fell in to shut the reactor to shut down, as per design. Fail Safe.

Marianne Fellowes: Was this a human error, not following a set procedure or a mechanical failure?

Jon Yates: This was a relatively newly installed piece of equipment; it had just been maintained for the first time and was being brought back into service. The investigation is ongoing and being presented as we speak. We have done a significant adverse investigation into the event, and the initial review has shown a procedural error. The procedure was followed by the individuals to the letter, there was an error in the procedure which did not get the operators to check the status of the outlet circuit breaker before opening the bypass circuit breaker which led to the loss of supply.

Marianne Fellowes: We would need further information once the report has been presented, what would be the worst-case scenario had that not tripped? We are looking at a meltdown surely.

Jon Yates: The worst-case scenario is what occurred, as per design the rods fell into the core. The rods would fall into the core, as there is no power so gravity would take effect. They are fail-safe by design.

4253 Mike Taylor: Can you explain how the output of the reactor which was moderated while you were running on one turbine? The ONR have told me that could be done for a short period without risk to the reactor, can you explain how this was done as it seems a mystery how you could half the output?

Jon Yates: It is a feature of the design of Sizewell, that we have two turbines and one reactor. One turbine is 50% of the reactors full power, so by shutting down one turbine it allows us to reduce the output to 50% as agreed with National Grid. On the reactor itself, it is moderated by the pressurised water circuit using Boron to neutralise. This is not unusual; this is a regular occurrence in France.

Marianne Fellowes: Where did the water end up?

Jon Yates: It would go into the holding tanks, and then discharged to sea as per normal operational practice and within our discharge permit.

4254 Martin Freeman: Question regarding relocated facilities, do you still intend on felling Coronation Wood, if that is the case with the planning for Sizewell C going on, even with planning permission this may not go ahead. How do you plan on reinstating a 100-year wood?

Jon Yates: As I mentioned in my statement, this was breaking news for the judicial review being reported back. The intention is that we will be going ahead on clearance, we are not quite sure, and we are undertaking a review and looking at the programme.

Marianne Fellowes: This group has expressed its severe concerns about doing that, especially ahead of the DCO. Nobody locally thinks that the area should be cleared until we know what is happening with Sizewell C. We understand the driver is timing, we think this would damage the relationship the industry has with the local community, local authority, and everybody. I cannot speak strongly enough; this is the biggest thing that has hit us. You are willing to do that without the guarantee that Sizewell C will be going ahead.

Jon Yates: I understand the severe reservations and concerns, it has gone through the planning process and the judicial review, the views have been heard and the review has been held and to mitigate that, the judge acknowledge the environmental impact concluded that the majority that the 229 trees that need to be removed are of a low quality, and limited amenity value and the loss would be balanced by the planting of over 2500 juvenile woodland trees that are broad leaf which would be appropriate for the soil and the area. We will lose an area of woodland, but we will create a better quality.

Marianne Fellowes: Why can it not be built in the original place; this is the biggest issue. People want it there; we were told this would be a buffer for the cold fuel store. I have looked at the planning documents.

Jon Yates: I really do not want to go back over the planning application, the reviews have been held and it was subject to a judicial review and we are not going to change that in this meeting I am afraid. I will be looking to see how this develops, what we do and when we do it as subject to that judicial review we now have the opportunity to progress our plans and what we are looking at is if and when we want to do that, and I do not have any further answers.

Marianne Fellowes: You have been planning a new application to East Suffolk, to not use Pillbox field and I would request that you do not start any felling until that next process has been concluded. I would put that formally in writing.

4255 Joan Girling: I must declare my interests, I put the case forward for judicial review and the judge's decision was made. Explain reasoning for an application against Suffolk Coastal and their planning decision, and why you are doing that when the community is opposed to it and you are supposed to be good neighbours.

Jon Yates: Thank you for declaring your interest, and it is difficult to answer those questions. The request to change Pillbox Field, was based on the discussion that this was preferred by the community, Sizewell A, and ourselves. We have not yet fully landed on the decision, and a planning application would be made to use the brownfield site. We do need to use the land from Coronation Wood for the relocation of Sizewell C, I do not have definitive answer now and not had a chance to talk to the Sizewell C Team and as soon as I have further information, I will share this.

Jonathan Jenkin: To add to the conversation, we have only just been made aware of the juridical review and we are on currently processing the freedom of information request (FOI) and we are on track to provide a response by the deadline. As has been mentioned there has been various meetings between the NDA, Magnox and EDF on the transfer of land to EDF and preparing for a commercial deal on that and we will provide full details in the FOI request. As Jon said, no deal has been concluding and that is the direction of travel that we are preparing for as the land is no longer needed by the NDA or Magnox.

Marianne Fellowes: My understanding of end states, is that it forms part of a contract with the community. We have all had several conversations, and we are aware there are limited usages of the land due to decommissioning and wide areas of the land cannot be used as this is where things will need to be stored. I am disappointed that it implies that the community does not have a say, and it will go to enabling new build. It is not just the relocation of Sizewell B; the only reason is to relocate the infrastructure is to make way for a larger Sizewell C site.

Jonathan Jenkin: I recognise the concerns that have been raised, there have been discussion at previous SSG meetings on the potential transferring this area of land, I think we need to reflect on the broader discussion with the local community of end states and link into the end state strategy. Objectives are to try to secure value for money on areas of land that are no longer value for money for the NDA and Magnox for decommissioning. We need to reflect on how we engage on that, and I am very keen to get colleagues in Magnox and NDA to start engaging with a range of stakeholder groups on the future process for reviewing end state sites. On this specific area I think from our perspective, the development of Sizewell C is not within our remit, we are approaching this as an area of land that we no longer need. We are remaining a neutral stance on this situation.

Marianne Fellowes: I think a sit-down meeting would be beneficial to discuss with EDF, Magnox and the NDA and the local planning departments so this can be discussed in depth.

Pete Wilkinson: I think we are very naive that the nuclear industry in all its guises, will not look after each other and the community comes last. I think it is disgraceful what EDF are planning on doing to Coronation Wood. We need to recognise this in future discussions. I would like to make a comment about the rods and thank god for gravity.

4256 Martin Freeman: After reading Sizewell A's decommissioning plans, they are about to start to decommission the RFT tanks and cut these up, is the Turbine hall now isolated from the system and getting ready for demolition? If this is the case why can't Sizewell B relocate on the footprint of the turbine hall? If this is not the case, maybe Sizewell B could come up with a financial incentive to rush that job along and coronation wood could be saved.

Marianne Fellowes: I think we will tack that onto a wider discussion about Sizewell C and coronation wood, Ian would you be able to provide an answer to the turbine hall question?

Ian Cuthbert: The current plan, which is detailed in my presentation. We are starting to do the isolations for the Turbine Hall, there is extra funding available which is why we are looking at the OFT Tanks and I will detail this further in my presentation. The current plan for turbine hall demolition is in 2023, Magnox has four turbine halls which they are looking to demolish, and this would be given out as one group of work to save money for the taxpayer. Isolation was due to start in April, due to Covid 19 could not go ahead and will start in November 2020.

Marianne Fellowes: Could this be noted that there is a potential, and the solution needs to be discussions between stakeholders and all parts of the industry, and to look for something that does not use coronation wood and any other greenfield land. There was no independent person at the conversation yesterday.

4257 Trevor Branton: Regarding coronation wood, could the felling be left until the last minute and after the new woodland is planted? Locally there is a great feeling that Coronation Wood would be flattened, and Sizewell C project will be abandoned or postponed, and the new woodland would not be planted.

Jon Yates: I will take that view into the discussion we will have, and I understand what you are saying, and I will take that forward. Also, I would like to reiterate the point Peter made about control rods, as that is a Nuclear safety challenge and I would like to clear that up. The control rods fall in at 1.6 seconds, we have never had a failure in any testing, and we do not need super articulated rods like at Hunterston, we are a PWR and do not have a graphite core. We have full confidence, and we have an emergency boron system if the rods do not fall which will kill the reactor core should it be needed.

4258 Mike Taylor: The question arises around Sizewell C's development consent order is vague on the red line boundary, Sizewell B is being used and it is impossible to decipher whether the buildings will fit the proposal. We are looking for the ONR do their work for site licensing and to ensure that the buildings are in the right positions. At the end of the day we are going to need a plan for the whole of the estate to be discussed and debated, it will need to be coordinated. I hope that this view is taken forward.

Marianne Fellowes: We do have a previous action 4018 4019 Nuclear Site licence area needed clarification; I have raised that we need to go back to that action.

Chris Wheeler: the community do not want Coronation Wood felled, with the changes to plans regarding the carpark. Would they look at the plans for the training centre, as it would make sense for Leiston to be the location.

Jon Yates: Training facilities, part of the optioneering consultation and there was a need for the training centre to be closer, we did look at that and it was felt better for our needs. We considered several issues and not just cost.

Chris Wheeler: I would like to revisit the issue of the switchboard failure, which concerns me. I would expect in a system as sophisticated as we have at Sizewell B, failure of a single power feed would have been backed up automatically with causing the reactor to trip.

Jon Yates: it is difficult to explain without a diagram in front of me, we have an interruptible power supply as mentioned, that is the strongest back up you can have. The fault occurred when we opened the bypass outlets from the without closing the UPS first.

b) Daniel Gregory (Site Inspector, Office for Nuclear Regulation)

4259 Daniel delivered an update and explained that the SGG should have had my report for the first quarter of the year April to June, due to the evolving Corona Virus Pandemic and travel restrictions there were no visits made to site, and would only visit for urgent works such as investigations and time sensitive per missioning. Daniel did not need to visit the site and work was carried out remotely with a focus on how they were coping in the pandemic and ensuring staffing levels remained at an adequate level.

Routine site inspections were carried out in the summer remotely, one on licence conditions 4 & 5 and one looking at radioactive material transport. Site visit was carried out to look at principle training, supervision and how the Corona Virus is affecting those as well as condition of site. Site has managed their responsibility well and delivered several training courses during the period.

Going forward, remote inspections where inspections are more document based will continue and site visits made were needed.

4260 Marianne Fellowes: Asked for clarification on last paragraph in report, regulatory updates, and application for Sizewell C. In terms of resources and priorities, you state that you feel it is unlikely that the application will not be ready until end of 2021 before it can proceed to assessment phase. That timeframe is outside of the DCO.

Daniel Gregory: The 2021, is to issue a decision on the site licence. I will get an update from projects on this and speak to the Sizewell C assessment team.

Marianne Fellowes: Perhaps we can take this discussion offline on how these fit into the DCO timeline.

4261 Martin Freeman: A question on the operational noise on Sizewell B, there is recording equipment in my back garden to measure the operational noise and I believe that equipment demonstrated they were operating above the permissible planning noise. This was during normal operational hours; I have constantly asked what they will do about it and I am not getting any answers. With the loss of coronation wood, I am concerned this will be higher – what will be done about this and when?

Jon Yates: I was not aware of this going on, I will take this away and speak to Paul Morton and ensure that this passed on and we will get back to you. We do want to mitigate the risk and the noise, and I apologise for the inconvenience that this has caused.

Mike Taylor: Point of information, Sizewell C Nuclear New Build Team from the EA are trying to speed up their October meeting, the ONR are involved and I have asked through the agenda that the situation of the site licence for B & C and there is a report back on that.

c) Richard Lee, Environment Agency

4262 Richard delivered his report and highlighted the following points: Site visits have been halted due to covid; an intensive remote site visit was carried out in May looking at how they were managed during Corona Virus. Results of inspection showed good practices, and the site was operating satisfactorily. Permit variation to carbon 14 emission, not able to prejudge the permit variation, comments to be looked at next week and the expectation is that the determination will be given in due course. Andrew Stone is leading on this, this does not mean that they are not complying with the permit, and the station wrote to the EA explain and extensive investigation has been carried out to why this has happened. The application is to return the permitted levels back to 1995 when the site opened.

Richard invited questions from the SSG

4263 Pete Wilkinson: I have sent questions in, and the basis of my concerns is the difference of opinion between the EA and the plant operators. You have said that you will only vary the permit, if harm to the environment, people and wildlife is minimised. Spokespeople at EDF have said this is harmless. No evidence provided by EDF that the change poses no risk to public health, and this contradicts statement made the EA. I am also hopefully that my questions that I have sent in will be answered in full, my question today is: is Carbon 14 dangerous to the community or is EDF correct in saying it is harmless?

Richard Lee: I would not use the word dangerous; all nuclear activity will have an impact to the environment and our role as Environmental Regulator is to monitor the impact on the environment, and in line of best scientific opinion and that any impact is minimal to environment and within legislation and government guidance. We review this as part of determination of the permit variation.

4264 Chris Wheeler: Could you clarify how large an increase of carbon-14 emissions is being approved?

Richard Lee: The current permitted limit is 500 giga-becquerels to air per year, applied to increase to 600 giga-becquerels by air a year.

4265 Marianne Fellowes: Excess in those three months? Could you tell us what caused the increase?

Richard Lee: Unable to speculate, the investigation is still ongoing, and we expect the operator to know what they are doing better than we do. Carbon emissions have gone down since, and I do not have these in front of me and I will provide these to the SSG for where the emissions were exceeded.

Action: to provide previous quarter reports for comparison.

3. Sizewell A Reports

a) Ian Cuthbert, Magnox Site Director

4266 Ian delivered his report on behalf of Magnox and delivered the following points:

Safety and compliance, there were no safety, first aid or compliance concerns during since the last meeting. There was an operation pause at the site 19 March, in response to Covid19. 24hr security was maintained, staff worked from home where possible. Return to work commenced 1 June and the site is now back to normal operations. On site there are the following staff:

- 201 Magnox staff on site made up of
 - 156 Sizewell staff
 - 45 Magnox support staff
 - Magnox took on 4 apprentices in September 2020

4267 Covid 19 – Impact on Magnox fleet, operational pause on all Magnox sites in Mid-March, essential work was carried out such as safety and compliance work. Gradual return to work was implemented, with the first group to ensure covid safety measures were put into place. Quality plans were implemented, work has been carried out to ensure the site can be back up and running. Regulators have been to site, and this is ongoing work and under review to ensure that the staff feel as safe as possible. Over 130,000 items were donated to various settings towards the national effort.

4268 Covid 19 – Supporting the local community, very proud of staff. Sizewell were quick to lead on this with Magnox and services included:

- Delivering prescriptions covering an area of 120m² and this continued until July
- Transporting blood for the NHS
- Marshalling traffic at doctors' surgeries
- Helping at foodbanks
- Crocheting ear-savers to ease face mask discomfort

4269 Plant and structures programme update, KDC to mobilise 19th October to commence removing 6 reserve feedwater tanks, fire hydrant tanks, towns main tank and the associated pipework and building 58.

4270 Ponds programme update, ponds are now drained, and the teams are now processing the collected debris. The debris will be sorted and consigned to either a Shielded Transfer Plot or a Miscellaneous Contaminated Items basket as either LLW or ILW and transferred to the waste team for long term storage. Work will then continue to decontaminate and stabilise the ponds walls and floors, operational target for core drilling of the ponds floor to be completed by April 2021.

4271 Asset Care Project, the Fix it Now (FIN) asbestos team will continue into 2020/21 – targeting small-scale asbestos works and there is a small number of projects ongoing to improve the staff working conditions predominately the canteen facilities being upgraded and office block for the waste team. Bird netting of the admin building and other buildings have been completed, removal of legacy scaffolds and the covid 19 arrangements are in place to protect staff.

- 4272 What next? Priorities continue to be safe assets care, ensuring that the fabric of the buildings do not degrade to present a hazard to our workforce or the environment. Planned work includes:
- Commence isolation of turbine hall
 - Strike and removal of legacy scaffolds
 - Removal of redundant equipment from site – sale of reactor desks recently to a film company.
 - Continuation of ponds programme
 - Removal of reserve feed tanks
 - Various asset care programme works

4273 Socio-economics – 2020/21, applications and funding that have been provided:

- £87,000 to Saxmundham Art Station (direct NDA funding)
- £25,000 made available to each Magnox site to support Covid 19 Initiatives
- £64,203 to five socio-economic projects:
- Kesgrave Kestrels U-12 Football team
- Leiston FC – Tournament Medals
- East Suffolk council food and drink promotional event
- East Suffolk Council, East Suffolk Business association and Town Group Support Programme business development.
- Leiston Long Shop Museum (year 2)

Ian highlighted that further information can be found via www.magnoxsocioeconomic.com and if anyone is interested in making an application they can speak to Haf Morris via haf.e.morris@magnoxsites.com or [tel: 01797 343549](tel:01797343549).

Ian invited questions from the SSG.

4275 Marianne Fellowes: In the past, I have made a plea about a local archive as the station has been a huge part of the community and we can maintain some of the history, and can the community be apart of these discussions.

Ian Cuthbert: This goes through a framework, who arrange the sale of redundant materials and the funds go back into the organisation. I am aware of the request for local history, and I am happy to discuss in consultation with the NDA. I am sure we can work something out.

4276 Joan Girling: I have three questions, Apprentices and what will they be doing? How many cases of covid have been found amongst staff? And removal of tanks, can you explain that further please?

Ian Cuthbert: We have four apprentices and 2 will go to Bridgewater college for Health Physics, and 2 to Ipswich College for Electrics with the view to develop into Electrical Engineers.

Covid, no Sizewell A staff have been affected, some staff have reported symptoms and tests have been negative.

Tanks, back of the turbine hall which will be cut up and will be around 12 weeks of work and I am very well aware that we made some noise, and we have stated that we only work Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm to ensure that minimal disruption to our neighbours.

4277 Trevor Branton: You mentioned that the fire hydrant tanks will be removed, how will you maintain firefighting capability.

Ian Cuthbert: The firefighting capabilities were fed through a ring main, and we have carried out updates to this system and the regulators and local fire service are aware of our capabilities and the tanks have been isolated for a number of years.

b) John Rogers, Site Inspector Office for Nuclear Regulation

4278 John delivered his report verbally, agreed within the ONR due to the pause that no report would be written. Site engagement was increased to weekly meetings, to monitor the situation around covid and to monitor ongoing works and ensuring compliance.

Return to site, reviews were made on all quality plans to ensure legal requirements had been captured and area of interest to note was to ensure that they had not lost the SQEP (Suitably qualified and experience persons), concerns that people may have got rusty – this was captured in the quality plan.

Inspection took place on 18 August, two-fold to look at both the covid arrangements and to monitor competencies of staff. Overall conclusion was the site did well and maintained safety in the return to works. Developed good safety protocols to ensure the safety of staff on site and are continuing to do so.

Future Inspections, intend to get the inspection plan back up and running, two further inspections planned one for compliance for INR 2017 and modifications system licence condition 22.

John invited questions from the SSG

4279 Marianne Fellowes: regarding ONR for the business case to decommission the turbine hall, would the ONR have any input?

John Rogers: Business cases are for Magnox and NDA, what we must not lose sight of is if land is transferred it will need relicence for Sizewell A.

C) Peter Reynolds, Environment Agency

4280 Peter delivered his report verbally, Peter explained that there have been no site visits made to Sizewell A in recent months due to the pandemic. In the interim, there has been involvement with the weekly meetings and to discuss the environmental issues with the closed facility. Reports have been satisfactory, and only one item remains to be tested as there have been no discharges. Routine work has been carried out for standard testing and no concerns have been found.

He is hoping to look at the Water discharge infrastructure, solid waste management and gaseous discharge for the rest of the financial year.

Peter invited questions from the group:

4281 Pete Wilkinson: When decommission was being used a focus for Stakeholder engagement there was an expected norm that the conventional and radiological discharges would increase, and I wanted to ask if this is something you have been monitoring and is there a significant increase?

Peter Reynolds: We monitor the routine discharges on site, which can go up when certain activities take place such as the ponds programme – slight increase when the ponds were drained. We expect site operators to come to use and explain the mechanisms in the waste that would cause the increase, if you look at more active decommissioning such as Bradwell you could see the increase and it remained within the safe limits.

4282 Janet Fendley: The solid waste that was discharged is that going into the sea?

Peter Reynolds: No, very low-level waste could go to an approved landfill that is approved to take nuclear waste, low level waste would go to a low level waste repository in Cumbria, higher still immediate level waste as there is no geological waste facility it will need to go into storage until a facility becomes available.

Janet Fendley: The gas you spoke about is caesium 137 a gas or a solid?

Peter Reynolds: It is classed as a solid and can be discharged through the liquid airflow system and the radionuclides are monitored at Sizewell A .

Janet Reynolds: is the sea monitored?

Peter Reynolds: There is an environmental discharge programme looking at the Silt and I believe seawater, I can check.

Janet Fendley: I would be grateful if you could check, as I swam in that sea a lot in the summer and so did my grandchildren.

Peter Reynolds: We believe it to be safe.

D) Johnathan Jenkin, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

4283 Jonathan delivered his report verbally, and gave an update on current news, future and what has been happening during the busy period. Halfway through public consultation on draft strategy 4, members know that this is something that is reviewed and published every 5 years. Online consultation event to take place on 19 October – details have been sent to the chair. We hope that stakeholders will take part in that event, public consultation due to close on 8 November 2020.

Announcement to bring forward the reactor decommissioning at Trawsfynydd, this follows engagement over the last 2 – 3 years with several stakeholders and the workshop in November 2019. Magnox continuing to review the site-specific strategies for the remaining sites and should be done by end of 2022. Discussions taking place of the engagement with stakeholder, further details to be provided in the future.

4284 First groupwide socio economic impact strategy was published in the summer; it references the long shot project for Sizewell and references key local strategies and the framework for inclusive growth. This is a continued review of the longer-term economic impact of Covid, and hopefully reflects the local priorities on each site.

Jonathan invited questions from the SSG

4285 Janet Fendley: I am interested in the Suffolk raising the bar project, is there a separate paper on that?

Jonathan Jenkin: I do not have a separate paper; I am happy to send the website link and point over the relevant page.

Action: Jonathan to make these available

4286 Pete Wilkinson: I would like to ask about the permanent solution for high active waste report, why is this called permanent?

Jonathan Jenkin: This is a good challenge; it is our best understanding on the solution of high active waste. In the very longer-term knowledge and experience may expect there to be a better way based on our current understand this represents the best solution.

4287 Mike Taylor: Are you aware of any plans to combine the decommissioning of Magnox fleet and EDF's fleet? We are aware that there is a shortfall in the funds for EDF's decommissioning, I am wondering how that debate is going?

Jonathan Jenkin: I think as we have indicated before, and BEIS released a report and there have been discussions since and there is a case for the NDA to take on those liabilities after defueling the AGR Fleet and this an option that the government are looking at. Negotiations are ongoing, and many considerations need to be made before a discussion is made and I am not sure when this will happen.

John McNamara: This is a live discussion that is currently going on at Hunterston SSG, this will be the first AGR to go offline, be defueled and decommissioned followed by Hinkley B. To reassure you all, this is a live topic and EDF have taken steps towards this and initiated discussions with the local community and staff. We do not have the policy in place to say that Hunterston will come to the NDA, the SSGs will be included in those discussion.

4. Chairs Report

4289 Marianne explained to the group what has happened since the last meeting and confirmed participation in a meeting with NDA and Magnox about decommissioning and the Strategy 4, these are the main activities that took place since the last meeting. Proposal for a subgroup in the next few weeks to have a working party to look at the NDA strategy, we need to discuss the Carbon-14 and the relocation of facilities at Sizewell B.

A) Action Tracker

4290 Nine actions need further work to be carried out, and a number can be closed.

B) Vice Chair Report

4291 Reprocessing at Sellafield will start up again, contamination of Irish Sea will recommence and would like to know what the site licences are from the NDA in respect of what the discharges are? I would be grateful for this information.

C) Any other business

4292 Joan Girling: Question to NDA, on the strategy 4 – do you also have the environment strategy running alongside it as well, as it appears to me that the economical impact is discussed more than the environment and I am aware that you need to maximise your assets but this should not be at the cost of the environment, can this be on the agenda for the meeting on 19 October?

John McNamara: I am sure this will be on the agenda and will be taken section by section. Sustainability and care of the environment run through every discussion.

Joan Girling: My main concern, is that we were told that the Sizewell A site would return to greenfield, and this will not happen and there are still issues around the decommissioning and considerations need to be made around the environmental impact and the repair of the environment as well as maximising assets.

Marianne Fellowes: action to register as an interested party with the Scottish Power Renewables energy project and the impact on Sizewell A and B, I can confirm I have done this. I spoke on behalf of the group at the Aldeburgh town council preliminary hearings and have a separate slot at the open floor hearing and will be using the comments made in this group and if anyone has anything, they would like me to add please contact me.

Closing

Marianne thanked the group for their attendance and their input and minutes will be made available as soon as possible.

Meeting closed