

Geological Disposal Steering Group
14:00 – 16:00, Thursday 19 Dec 2013
Room LG03, 3 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW

Attendees

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)
HM Treasury (HMT)
Ministry of Defence (MoD)
Welsh Government
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)
Radioactive Waste Management Directorate (RWMD)

Minutes and actions from last meeting

1. The minutes of the 12 September 2013 meeting were agreed and published on the DECC website. Actions from the meeting had been completed.

Programme Highlight Report

2. DECC and RWMD presented the Programme Highlight Report to update the group on progress on the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) programme since the last meeting. DECC gave an update on the consultation on a revised siting process which had closed and received approximately 700 responses (including campaign responses). The stakeholder and public dialogue events held in support of the consultation had been useful, with initial positive feedback from many participants. A successful webinar event was also held which created a further level of engagement and transparency.
3. It was agreed that in line with preparations for a new siting process, following the consultation, the Terms of Reference for GDSG should be reviewed as part of ensuring the right governance for a new phase of the programme.

Action 1: DECC to engage with RWMD on reappraisal of overall governance arrangements for the programme and bring options to the next GDSG meeting, including a draft revised Terms of Reference.

4. RWMD reported that work is progressing on the preparation of geological information ready for the launch of a new siting process.
5. RWMD is also planning a revised suite of generic Disposal System Safety Case documentation to reflect the 2013 UK radioactive waste inventory and comments from regulators and CoRWM.
6. In reviewing milestones the group also discussed the GDF stakeholder engagement plan and RWMD's proposed move to become a Wholly Owned Subsidiary (WOS) of the NDA.
7. The Group agreed that there is a substantial body of work and challenging timescales involved in delivering a policy document on a revised siting process but that a final Government position later in the year was the right level of ambition.
8. There was agreement that going forward, longer term risks should be kept under review as part of the overall risk register and that the Highlight Report

would be used to focus on appropriate near term risks. The need to test the timing of key milestones and how they will be delivered within forecast was discussed and there was agreement that it is important to have milestones which can be viewed with a high level of confidence.

9. The group agreed that a new programme risk should be considered to reflect the possibility that a setback with an international GDF programme could adversely affect confidence in the UK programme.

Response to Consultation and Revised Policy Document

10. DECC presented a proposed approach on delivering the Government response to the consultation on a siting review and the next steps of policy development. DECC confirmed that the Government was aiming to publish its response to the consultation in late February/early March.
11. DECC outlined its approach to analysing responses to the consultation, which included identifying and summarising key themes, evidence and supporting rationale. There was agreement that the responses to the consultation should be published alongside Government's response to maximise transparency for stakeholders.
12. There followed a discussion on resource requirements for the work and the need to test potential 'pinch points' particularly when deploying specialist input such as legal, economists and scientists.

Action 2: DECC to further test resource requirements for the work to deliver Government response and revised siting process document, including specialist inputs.

13. The group also discussed the form that the revised policy document should take. It was agreed that the purpose of the revised document is to set out an updated and clarified revised siting process in the context of maintaining and building on the overarching principles set out in the 2008 White Paper.

Action 3: DECC to consider the appropriate point to consult expert groups including CoRWM, ONR and BGS on emerging proposals to be included in the revised policy document.

AOB

14. The group agreed that a further GDSG meeting should be scheduled to enable discussion of the draft Government response to the consultation.

Action 4: DECC to schedule additional date for next GDSG meeting.

Meetings scheduled for 2014

- 2:00pm 18 February
- 2:00pm 20 March
- 2:00pm 13 May
- 2:00pm 15 July
- 2:00pm 10 September
- 2:00pm 11 November

