

Regulatory Interface Management (RIM) Group Meeting
Warrington, 13 June 2013
Minutes

Attendees:

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC, by telephone)
Environment Agency (EA)
Local Government Association Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (NuLeAF)
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Radioactive Waste Management Directorate
(NDA, Chair & Secretary)
Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

1. Introduction and opening remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees, in particular the representative from NuLeAF attending the RIM Group Meeting for the first time.

2. Minutes and actions from the previous meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting (26 February 2013) were accepted as a true record and approved for publication on the NDA website.

Action RIM2013/04: RIM Group Secretary to publish approved minutes of previous meeting (26 February 2013) on the NDA website.

Actions

RIM2012/11	RIM Group Secretary to include item on 'Update on implementation of Localism Act 2011 amendments to major infrastructure development provisions' on the agenda for the next RIM Group meeting – ongoing . Efforts to identify an appropriate opportunity for CLG to provide the update would continue.
RIM2013/01	RIM Group Secretary to publish approved minutes of previous meeting (27 July 2012) on the NDA website – complete .
RIM2013/02	RWMD to reengage with CLG regarding representation (by exception) on the RIM Group – ongoing .
RIM2013/03	RIM Group Secretary to confirm date for RIM Group meeting in May/June 2013 – complete .

3. DECC update

DECC provided an update on the review of the MRWS siting process. The Secretary of State has reaffirmed that geological disposal remains Government policy for the long-term management of higher-activity radioactive waste in England and Wales, and that the approach to siting continues to be based on voluntarism and partnership. On 13 May, DECC issued a call for evidence inviting views on the site selection aspects of the MRWS process. This call for

evidence closed on 10 June and around 200 responses had been received. DECC had not yet decided whether it would publish the responses, although it would publish a summary of its analysis of them.

Action RIM2013/05: DECC representative to feed question of the publication of responses to the call for evidence back to DECC for consideration

DECC's initial analysis of the responses has identified eleven themes which, whilst they are all interlinked, can be summarised as:

- community benefits;
- the planning process(es);
- strategic environmental assessment;
- geological pre-screening;
- the waste inventory;
- staged decision making;
- the decision making level;
- how to gauge support;
- advocacy;
- the regulators and regulatory regimes;
- is there a "Plan B"?

Responses to the call for evidence will be further analysed and a consultation document setting out any proposed changes to the site selection process drafted over the summer. It is anticipated that a consultation on any proposed changes will be launched in September and will run until December. It is expected that any resulting changes to the existing MRWS site selection process following the consultation would be introduced during 2014.

4. RWMD update

NDA is in the process of seeking Government approval of its plans to form RWMD into a subsidiary. There remain only a few key issues to be resolved.

The need to define the subsidiary's role in its articles of association has raised questions about whether the subsidiary should adopt RWMD's current mission or whether its mission should be broader: perhaps encompassing a broader role in the management of higher activity radioactive waste. It was generally agreed that there could be benefit from a broader role for RWMD.

In preparation for subsidiary formation, NDA is developing a shadow board for RWMD, to which it has recruited a new independent member and a new member from within NDA. A further NDA member is yet to be appointed. Recent recruitments to RWMD include: an interim Stakeholder & Communications Director and two stakeholder engagement staff; an operational safety manager; a geological investigations manager; and a research manager. There are also plans to strengthen RWMD's geological expertise through the creation of roles for a structural geologist, a hydrogeochemist and the appointment of a chief geologist. It is anticipated that the chief geologist would work for RWMD part time while maintaining wider involvement in the geoscientific community.

RWMD's development of its organisational development action plan is progressing and it will be shared with the regulators for comment in July as agreed through the Technical and Organisational Scrutiny Programme. It is intended that the plan will be completed in time to inform this year's business planning cycle within RWMD and that it will be reviewed regularly.

RWMD is to revise its Permissions Schedule in the light of the legal and regulatory developments that have occurred since its original publication in 2010 and will be circulating a draft to the RIM membership towards the end of August. It is recognised that it is likely to be necessary to prepare a further revision if changes are made to the MRWS site selection process.

RWMD's work programme continues to be dominated by its generic work programme and the provision of waste management advice. While resources will no longer be required to support desk based studies given the site selection process has not proceeded to the next stage in Cumbria, they will be required to support DECC's MRWS process review or other priorities. An increase in demand for disposability advice from Sellafield, Magnox and Dounreay is also anticipated.

5. Regulators' update

EA reported that it has met with DECC and RWMD to discuss DECC's review of the MRWS site selection process. EA has also provided a response to DECC's call for evidence which is available online.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was established 01 April and has responsibility for environmental regulation in Wales. EA expects to provide NRW with support on nuclear regulation in the short to medium term.

It is proposed that the current charging agreement by which EA charges RWMD for the costs of its regulatory scrutiny will be replaced when RWMD becomes an NDA subsidiary. Work on a new charging agreement will need to begin well in advance of the subsidiary being formed.

ONR reported that it will be moving into its new operating model on 01 July. Mike Weightman has now retired as ONR's Chief Inspector and Colin Patchett is acting in this role until a permanent replacement is appointed. John Jenkins has now been appointed as Chief Executive of ONR. ONR's scrutiny of RWMD's work will be resourced through a GDF sub-programme of its Decommissioning, Fuel and Waste Programme. Transport and Security will come under programmes of their own and RWMD's contacts with these programmes will remain as before, but the GDF sub-programme will take an overarching view of all ONR interactions with RWMD.

ONR decided not to respond to DECC's call for evidence on the review of the MRWS site selection process.

EA, SEPA and ONR hope to meet with CoRWM on 02 July.

EA and ONR will be carrying out a joint inspection and audit of RWMD's disposability assessment processes in June. The purpose is to consider RWMD's arrangements for disposability assessment including linkages to GDF design, the provision of packaging advice to licensees and its "periodic review" process that aims to ensure previously issued Letters of Compliance remain valid. This inspection will be followed by joint inspections of waste producers to assess how they take account of RWMD's advice in their management of higher activity radioactive waste.

SEPA reported that progress was being made on the implementation of Scottish Government Policy for Higher Activity Waste through work to develop a strategy for higher activity waste management in Scotland. A considerable amount of work has also been going on in relation to the revocation of Dounreay's existing Radioactive Substances Act authorisation.

EA, ONR and SEPA all reported that they were jointly involved in the development of Nuclear Research Index for disposal. RWMD will not be asked to actively participate in the production of the index. As a result, the final report can be referenced as authoritative and independent. However, arrangements are being put in place to brief RWMD on its production.

EA, ONR and SEPA will also be reviewing the Joint Regulatory Guidance on the management of higher activity radioactive waste on nuclear licensed sites. A call for comments on the existing version will be issued in the near future.

6. NuLeAF update

NuLeAF reported that its Executive Co-Directors attended a meeting with CoRWM members in March to provide an overview of NuLeAF's work and discuss key issues arising from experiences of the MRWS process.

NuLeAF met with DECC in May and made a number of recommendations for progressing MRWS siting policy. NuLeAF responded to the Government's call for evidence and will publish its response on its website.

NuLeAF has met with Local Government Association (LGA) policy officers to consider mechanisms for communications between the MRWS process review and the LGA: the LGA view was that NuLeAF was probably the best interface.

NuLeAF is also considering how to increase local authorities' awareness of the re-launched MRWS process, including that of non-NuLeAF members. NuLeAF is to consider the additional resources that this would require.

NDA funding has allowed NuLeAF to engage internationally on geological disposal. In April, NuLeAF gave a presentation on the MRWS process to the InSOTEC conference. It is also considering attending the European Commission's EURADWASTE 2013, in October and a further InSOTEC Seminar in November.

NuLeAF has prepared guidance to its members on the incorporation of radioactive waste policies into their local plans.

7. Any other business

None

8. Proposed date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting was proposed for September/October at the NDA's Warrington office.

Action RIM2013/06: RIM Group Secretary to confirm date for RIM Group meeting in September/October 2013.

Summary of ongoing actions

RIM2012/11	RIM Group Secretary	Include item on 'Update on implementation of Localism Act 2011 amendments to major infrastructure development provisions' on the agenda for a future RIM Group meeting.
RIM2013/02	RWMD	Re-engage with CLG regarding representation (by exception) on the RIM Group.
RIM2013/04	RIM Group Secretary	Publish approved minutes of previous meeting (26 February 2013) on the NDA website.
RIM2013/05	DECC representative	Feed question of the publication of responses to the call for evidence back to DECC for consideration.
RIM2013/06	RIM Group Secretary	Confirm date for RIM Group meeting in September/October 2013.
