



18th BEIS/NGO Forum
Monday 19 December 2016
BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London
13.00 – 17.00

1. Welcome and Preliminaries

- Welcomes from Andy Blowers (AB) and Stephen Speed (SS) – SS explains makeup of new Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- BEIS Secretariat provided an update on the actions from the previous Forum.
- AB (on behalf of Sean Morris, who did not attend) commented on behalf of the NGOs on the lack of progress in discussing security and emergency planning – an update slot and brief discussion at the next NGO Forum was not deemed sufficient. It was agreed that BEIS would ask security and EP colleagues about the viability of a sub-group to discuss these issues.

ACTION 1: Before the next meeting, BEIS agreed to discuss with Sean Morris the possibility of a further meeting on emergency planning and security issues. BEIS to consider the possibility of reforming the sub-group on emergency planning.

- Neil Crumpton (NC) also commented on the lack of feedback from the Chief Scientific Advisor, since the meeting in February 2016 on the National Policy Statement (NPS).

ACTION 2: BEIS to follow up with the office of the Chief Scientific Advisor on feedback since the meeting in February 2016 on National Policy Statement (NPS) and provide an update to the Forum.

2. Nuclear Policy Update

- The discussion was led by Matt Clarke (MC), BEIS, who commented on the recent UK Government decisions on ownership and control of nuclear power plants, both Hinkley and future. A number of issues were raised in the discussion.



- 1) The overall UK Government review of ownership of critical infrastructure – NGOs interested in participating.

ACTION 3: BEIS to report back to the NGOs on whether ONR/NDA will be engaged in the UK Government's broader review of ownership and control of critical national infrastructure, and whether the NGOs will be invited to participate in any consultation.

- 2) The legal standing of the Austria-Luxembourg state aid case with the Commission on Hinkley after Brexit – BEIS stated that it is too soon to say what the legal implications might be.
- 3) Funding of decommissioning – BEIS explained that the operator will pay, and there will be mechanisms to ensure that the Nuclear Liabilities Fund (NLF) has enough money to pay for decommissioning.
- 4) NGOs asked about the government subsidies for nuclear power stations particularly in the context of decommissioning liabilities if a developer goes bankrupt – BEIS remarked that it would depend at what point in the lifecycle that this happened e.g. after construction, the Contract for Difference could be bought out by another energy company while before nuclear commissioning the construction would be comparable to a conventional non-nuclear construction project.
- 5) Is HPC a precedent for future funding models for nuclear power plants? What kind of contract might be expected in the future? BEIS stated that it is too soon to talk of specific contracts or funding models for future plants. HPC is not a precedent but one possible funding model. It is up to the developers to tell us how they will finance their plants.
- 6) Are the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 affecting decisions about building nuclear plants? BEIS commented that the relevance of the Act was not clear, as decisions on building nuclear plants were taken under different legislation.
- 7) In response to questions about the overall direction of the nuclear and energy policy of the UK Government, SS laid out BEIS' thinking in terms of factors that need to be taken into account in decarbonisation policy, covering energy, heating and transport. Nuclear power is part of this decarbonisation future. It was agreed, in light of the NGOs desire for a review of the NPS on nuclear energy and for a real consideration of their policy proposals, that a meeting will take place (SS and AB to discuss format) for an exchange of views on nuclear energy policy in the wider context of energy and decarbonisation policy. It was also flagged that the gov.uk website has further information on the wider decarbonisation policy.



ACTION 4: BEIS to arrange and host a meeting to explain the overall BEIS strategy and outlook on the development of energy and decarbonisation policy, to put nuclear in its wider context. The first step will be a discussion between BEIS and Andy Blowers over the format of the meeting, where the NGOs would then present their arguments for a review of the NPS relating to nuclear energy. This could potentially be at the next Forum.

8) Justification – Richard Bramhall (RB) sought clarification on the process by which his request for Justification of the EPR class of reactor will be considered, and BEIS will provide this in due course, noting that the request is a live case that will need to follow established procedures. (See action point below)

ACTION 5: BEIS will send RB a response to his Justification request according to the timelines that have been communicated to him in official correspondence.

9) Peter Wilkinson (PW) noted that there will be a legal challenge to Sizewell C due to the need to review the National Policy Statement. A number of supportive comments from NGO representatives throughout the discussion expressed the need for a comprehensive review of National Policy Statements relating to nuclear power.

- Tom Wintle (TW) led a discussion on Small Modular Reactors. After the opening of the competition in March 2016, 33 applicants had been successful in the initial phase, and BEIS were involved in on-going policy discussions. A decision will be taken in 2017 by Greg Clark in the context of the Emissions Reduction Plan. Planning issues to do with siting will be part of decision-making, if we go forward with SMRs. No commitment has been made yet – but a comprehensive evidence base, including on emissions, is being examined. Security will also be a key issue.
- Strong scepticism about the viability of SMRs was expressed by NGO representatives: on their ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, on the ability of the technology to work (only Rolls-Royce is close to proof of concept, and a lot of designs have been tried in past decades and failed), on value for money and on radioactive waste and security issues.



3. Radioactive Waste Management

- TW led a brief discussion on the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF), with consultations on the NPS and how communities will engage in the siting process expected in 2017. BEIS to discuss further with AB on when this might take place. A separate stand-alone meeting might be necessary depending on the timescales of the consultation. .
- BEIS and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) provided a joint presentation on government proposals for regulation of nuclear sites in the final stages of decommissioning. The project is at an early stage, with a discussion paper produced in November and a formal consultation in spring 2017. The preferred option is to amend the law to allow ONR to relinquish regulatory control over the site once the license is no longer needed, with environmental regulation being performed by the Environment Agency and health and safety regulation performed by the Health and Safety Executive. This would lead to a single set of standards, earlier re-use of sites, reducing the cost of nuclear clean-up and reducing unnecessary waste generation. The next steps, if the option is confirmed, would be to seek a bill slot in summer 2017.
- NGO concerns on this proposal centred on:
 - a) the dropping of the “25 year greenfield site” policy (AC pointed out that a review showed this was not always possible to do),
 - b) the risks of deregulation,
 - c) whether the policy could actually be implemented at any site – given that Magnox and AGR sites cannot be de-licensed as there are new reactors on the site, and on decommissioned sites reactor cores will be left in situ. Poor record-keeping at Dounreay and Sellafield that would prevent ONR from signing off on de-licensing (AC said they believe it is possible at Winfrith and Dounreay, and it is incumbent on the sites to show that they can be cleaned up),
 - d) how to demonstrate that the risks are below the threshold of 1 in a million (AC pointed out the existence of guidance, such as from the EA in 2016 on revoking permits).



4. Introduction to the Forum from Baroness Neville-Rolfe

- Baroness Neville Rolfe provided a short introductory speech to welcome the NGO Forum members.
- AB provided an opening statement on behalf of the NGO Forum members to the Minister. As well as welcoming present and prior Ministerial engagement with the forum, this statement highlighted the frustrations of NGOs over the last few months, particularly the lack of “open-minded engagement” from the government side, and the failure to find areas of common ground. Specific issues identified in the statement included new build and NPS, GDF and radiation and health. Baroness Neville Rolfe pointed to the 2017 consultation on the GDF.
- Subjects raised in the Q&A:
 - 1) Nuclear security issues and the remark by the IAEA chief inspector that Sellafield does not have adequate cyber-security capability. NC (PAWB) raised the concern that Britain is exporting a technology that is associated with Weapons of Mass Destruction around the world under the guise of a tool to mitigate climate change. NC also raised the concern that the pillars of nuclear policy seem to have been eroded, with a rumour that this is related to the nuclear submarine programme. They would appreciate a statement from Government to either confirm or deny this.

Baroness Neville Rolfe pointed out the government are investing record amounts in cyber security.
 - 2) Jo Brown (JB) (PCAH) raised her concern that politicians do not have sufficient information available regarding health impacts and the need for the government to study evidence on the health impacts of radiation, and the potential risks of routine discharges from nuclear power stations. JB brought some of this information to the event. The Minister offered to look at papers submitted and encouraged exchanges of views on health impacts. Peter Wilkinson (PW) mentioned that the ONR Progress report mentions health and protecting the workforce and public. He would like this statement to be retracted as he views it as indemonstrable in the short term given the long lead time of effects. Baroness Neville Rolfe noted that NGOs had been invited to speak on this topic. RB will engage with NGOs on this.



ACTION 6: BEIS Secretariat to circulate the information that JB brought to the event and urged the minister to read.

- 3) Concerns about SMRs (similar to discussion above) - Baroness Neville Rolfe emphasised that no decisions have been made yet, and that policies will be evidence-based.

5. Low Level Radiation and Health

- RB (Low Level Radiation Campaign LLRC) presented a paper setting out his proposed agenda for a meeting between representatives of the NGO forum and COMARE on the effects of radiation on health. Focussing the meeting solely on the COMARE 17 Report would exclude a number of topics of interest to members of the forum, as set out in his paper. These topics should form the Agenda for engagement between COMARE and the NGOs. He also remarked that, in the case of the GDF, the Swedish Government has funded the environmental movement to ensure that the opposite point of view is represented, while in the UK there is no affordable access to scientific studies.
- BEIS led the response, welcoming RB's paper as a significant step forward. While the proposed terms for the meeting differed from those put forward by COMARE in their proposal, and would need to be developed further to the satisfaction of both parties, there was now clear agreement that the meeting represented an opportunity to make progress on this issue. The NGOs agreed to support the Agenda and the process, put forward in RBs paper.
- AB repeated the request for resources for research, like in Sweden. SS agreed to review the situation.

ACTION 7: BEIS will engage with NGO and COMARE representatives to develop a process of engagement in order to arrange a meeting on radiation and health. The agenda and format of the meeting will be agreed by both COMARE and the NGOs, using RB's letter as a basis for interaction. BEIS will report the findings of the meeting back to a future NGO forum meeting.



6. Nuclear security

- Dr David Lowry (DDL) presented a paper on nuclear security, noting that a lot of the references were American, in view of the fact that not much information from the UK is in the public domain. The first key issue involved a US report of December 2016 from the Nuclear Threat Initiative on the risks of cyber-security, particularly threats to Sellafield and Bradwell. The second was the ONR's GDA report in 2011 on the AP1000, which he said did not assess a number of issues, including site physical security and the long-term storage of nuclear waste: further aircraft impact was not looked at. DDL said Westinghouse, as a non UK company, could not have access to the UK security document in order to do the assessment, which it was asserted could lead to shortcomings. One proposal was to enhance security through reduced digitisation and a return to analogue controls in certain areas if proposed by security regulators.
- BEIS led the discussion, emphasising the difficulty of speaking on security in a public forum, and reiterated the UK's standards on security, pointing to the 2016 cyber-security strategy.
- It was recognised that there was a need for the ONR to explain why they set the scope of the GDA the way that they do, and that there was an asymmetry in the NGO community's ability to get information from the EA and ONR directly (i.e. as opposed to public comments via the GDA website, which were relayed to the reactor vendors for response) – and it is more difficult from ONR given their security remit.

ACTION 8: BEIS will ask ONR to set out the rationale of the scope of the GDA – in relation to security issues and inclusion or exclusion of specific sub-topics.



7. Chairmen summary and close

- AB expressed hope that we have turned a corner, and commended BEIS for its responsiveness today – this needs to be turned into reality.
- SS commented that it had been a very instructive meeting and we are committed to hosting 3 meetings a year. The secretariat will look at 2017 dates early in the New Year.

End of meeting



Summary of actions

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2: BEIS to follow up with the office of the Chief Scientific Advisor on feedback since the meeting in February 2016 on National Policy Statement (NPS) and provide an update to the Forum.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
3: BEIS to report back to the NGOs on whether ONR/NDA will be engaged in the UK Government's broader review of ownership and control of critical national infrastructure, and whether the NGOs will be invited to participate in any consultation.	BEIS	Matthew Clarke
4: BEIS to arrange and host a meeting to explain the overall BEIS strategy and outlook on the development of energy and decarbonisation policy, to put nuclear in its wider context. The first step will be a discussion between BEIS and Andy Blowers over the format of the meeting, which could potentially be at	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat



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5: BEIS will send RB a response to his Justification request according to the timelines that have been communicated to him in official correspondence BEIS	BEIS	Matthew Clarke
6: BEIS Secretariat to circulate the information which PCAH brought to the event and urged the minister to read.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
7: BEIS will engage with NGO and COMARE representatives to arrange a meeting on radiation and health and report the findings of the meeting back to a future NGO forum meeting.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
8: BEIS will ask ONR to set out the rationale of the scope of the GDA – in relation to security issues and inclusion or exclusion of specific sub-topics.	BEIS	Matthew Clarke



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Attendees:

NGOs	
Andrew Blowers	Co-Chair of the NGO Forum and Chair of the Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group (BANNG)
Richard Bramhall	Low Level Radiation Campaign (LLRC)
Frank Boulton	MedAct
Dr David Lowry	Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates (NWAA)
Phil Davies	Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates (NWAA)
Jo Brown	Parents Concerned About Hinkley (PCAH)
Sue Aubrey	Stop Hinkley Campaign
Alan Jeffrey	Stop Hinkley Campaign
Neil Crumpton	People Against Wylfa B (PAWB)
Rod Donington-Smith	Cumbrian Trust
Rita Holmes	Ayrshire Radiation Monitoring Group (ARM)
Peter Wilkinson	Together Against Sizewell C
Ruth Balogh	West Cumbria and North Lakes FoE
Ian Ralls	Friends of the Earth
Regulators	
Stephen Newson	Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CORWM)
Bill Hamilton	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)
Anna Clark	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)
John Corderoy	Radioactive Waste Management (RWM)
Rachel Dowling	Nuclear Industry Association (NIA)
Gemma Cooper	Environment Agency (EA)
Saffron Price-Walter	Environment Agency (EA)
BEIS Minister	
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Minister, BEIS
BEIS Officials	
Stephen Speed	BEIS
Tom Wintle	BEIS
Matthew Clarke	BEIS
BEIS Secretariat	