



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

BEIS/NGO nuclear Forum
Tuesday 18 July 2017
Abbey Community and Conference Centre, Westminster, London
12.30 – 16.00

1. Welcome and preliminaries

Co-chairs Stephen Speed (BEIS Director, Civil Nuclear and Resilience) and Professor Andy Blowers (Chairperson, Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group) opened the meeting, and welcomed attendees. They apologised for the hiatus since the last Forum and it was explained that the last meeting was cancelled due to the general election.

- There were apologies for the absence of a Minister, but it was announced that co-chair Professor Blowers will be invited to meet with Minister Harrington before the next Forum meeting. He will pass feedback from the Forum to the Minister, and hoped that the NGOs will nonetheless take advantage of the Forum in the absence of a Minister.
- Co-chairs announced the following meeting will be on 12 September and will be devoted to a discussion on radiation and health issues.
- Co-chairs reminded the Forum that the correct process of compiling and circulating papers for the meeting, as set out in the Terms of Reference, is to distribute papers through the Secretariat at least a week before the meeting.

2. Action point updates from the 19 December Forum

ACTION 1 – before the meeting, BEIS agreed to discuss with NGO Sean Morris the possibility of forming a sub-group on security and emergency planning.

BEIS confirmed that a sub-group will not be set up due to a lack of resources. The Forum can be used as a space to provide regular updates.

- BEIS officials suggested that particular topics can be raised during the Forum, which would be the best place for discussion.
- It was suggested that channels could be established to communicate on a less formal basis.
- BEIS to circulate the latest report on the Security Assessment Principles (SyAPs).

ACTION POINT 1: BEIS to circulate to the Forum the latest report on SyAPs.

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



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

The read out of the meeting has been shared with NGO Neil Crumpton. BEIS to follow up with Neil Crumpton offline.

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.

The Queen’s speech confirmed that the government will bring forward proposals to ensure that critical national infrastructure is protected to safeguard national security. Timeframes will be confirmed in due course.

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.

Ashley Ibbett from BEIS presented on development of energy and decarbonisation policy and co-chairs facilitated a discussion on nuclear development in context of energy policy development as part of the session’s main agenda.

ACTION 5 – BEIS to send NGO Richard Bramhall a response to his Justification request according to the timelines that have been communicated to him in official BEIS correspondence.

This agenda point was covered in the full formal response to Richard Bramhall justification request.

ACTION 6 – BEIS Secretariat to circulate the information which NGO Jo Brown brought to the event and urged the Minister to read.

The material was circulated to Forum members on 9 February 2017.

ACTION 7 – BEIS to engage with NGO and COMARE representatives to arrange a meeting on radiation and health, and report the findings back to a future NGO Forum meeting.

The Co-chair of COMARE has agreed to attend the next Forum on 12 September 2017 to discuss the COMARE 17 report with the group, as well as provide the opportunity to discuss views/ideas on future research.

- Richard Bramhall mentioned concerns were raised around the agenda with COMARE, who last spoke to the Forum in 2012.

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.

BEIS have been in contact with the ONR. An update was sent to the Forum members on 14 July, which included a web-link to the GDA technical assessment guidance.



3. Nuclear policy update

Matt Clarke from BEIS led the discussion, and opened it up with a departmental update. He introduced the recent National Audit Office (NAO) report on Hinkley Point C. Among their conclusions, the NAO found that the government had not properly considered the value for money (VfM) argument. The government acknowledged the NAO report, but dispute some of the conclusions as not all factors had been taken into account, such as the job creation and benefits to the supply chain. The upcoming Public Accounts Committee meeting was briefly mentioned, but dates have not yet been set. EDF had carried out an audit on Hinkley Point C; their findings report an increase in cost by £1.5bn and delays in Reactors 1 and 2 by 15 and 9 months respectively, but nonetheless there remained good progress on key nuclear milestones. A Green paper was launched earlier in the year regarding the Nuclear Sector deal. Nuclear Associates are holding a number of events regarding what could be included in such a deal. There is an expectation that the deal can be finalised towards the end of the year, although no date has been set.

The NGOs highlighted key concerns:

- difficulty in retrieving information from the department, leading to the poor use of public taxes, and that an informed debate cannot occur without such information
- government plans to take on board the nuclear safeguards through handing over to ONR, which would not be acceptable in other countries

It was explained that BEIS have worked with the procurement rules in place to manage a conflict of interest, and that the limitation of information released during a Freedom of Information request was due to the commercially sensitive nature of information. On the exit of Euratom, international verification will still be carried out by the IAEA.

Richard Bramhall discussed the letter he wrote with NGO Peter Wilkinson regarding COMARE/NGO expert to expert dialogue on radiation risk proposed by the 19 December 2016 Forum.

- He has written a letter to the Secretary of State which focuses on the topic of the new evidence submitted for a review of Justification of Practices including Ionising Radiation.
- The Chief Executive of COMARE has agreed to attend the next Forum meeting on 12 September and its work will be main area of discussion. This should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and toleration.

Sean Morris expressed frustration about the lack of stakeholder engagement. While the NGOs are frequently asked about their opinions, those opinions are not acted on. He cited examples of Sweden and Ireland's successful stakeholder engagement.



The Magnox committee's new draft guidance was discussed along with lessons learned from Bradwell. The Forum noted the presentation on nuclear security by NGO Dr David Lowry that was circulated to them. The Environment Agency's assessment has now been published. The public comments process remains open until 15 August.

ACTION POINT 2 – BEIS to distribute links to the whole life-cycle carbon emissions from nuclear energy.

ACTION POINT 3 – BEIS to provide an update to the next Forum on Euratom.

ACTION POINT 4 – NGO secretariat to send the letter provided by Richard Bramhall during the meeting to Energy Minister Harrington.

4. BEIS presentation on Development of Energy and Decarbonisation Policy

Ashley Ibbett (BEIS Director, Clean Energy) led a presentation on the development of energy and decarbonisation policy. He presented graphs that displayed the change in energy supply between 2010 and 2016, highlighting the reduction in coal as a source of energy in order to comply with the carbon reductions set out in the UK Climate Change Act of 2008. The presentation outlined a mixture of sources of electricity to meet the variances in electricity demand throughout the day, and demonstrated the capacity of renewable energy sources to meet the differing demands.

The modelling methods used were discussed, eg do they take into consideration nuclear energy spikes, and complexities with interconnected imports and regulation. It was explained that modelling does take into account potential unavailability, supply shocks, and the post-Brexit market for electricity. Also, capacity auctions guarantee security of supply. Jo Brown asked about Hinkley Point C (HPC) not being available until 2029 at the earliest, and therefore the need for hydropower in the absence of nuclear power. BEIS officials assured that further potential for developing hydropower will be taken into consideration.

Co-chair Professor Blowers then spoke to his paper, jointly written with Neil Crumpton, which argues that the costs of nuclear energy outweigh its benefits. Nuclear policy is not robust, and there are questions regarding the reduced costs of nuclear energy; renewable energy presents itself as the cheaper and more self-sufficient option. They also raised concerns about the lack of resilience in the nuclear strategy, emphasising the health and environmental impact, and vulnerability of the sites selected for new nuclear stations. The nuclear strategy is based on two plans: a solution to climate change and a base load



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

argument. Neither are necessary nor sound arguments that will provide a solid basis for nuclear justification or success.

A discussion followed where BEIS officials responded to particular elements of the paper:

- While the policy targets can be attained in a number of ways, the presence of nuclear power provides the lowest cost to the consumer.
- The department places a high priority in safety and security.
- Two of the developments are still on track to be completed before 2025.

The NGOs raised concerns that there is not a wide enough group of stakeholders and none that will challenge ideas sufficiently, and asked that BEIS provide more transparency on the value for money assessments on software modelling. For example, HPC is only costed until 2050, whereas the contract length is until 2060. There is a need for more stakeholder engagement in the development of the demand dispatch model to observe the way it is built and to participate in suggesting improvements.

NGO representatives asked BEIS about the size of BEIS's budget for CNRD and analysts that work on nuclear policy:

- BEIS explained that the majority of the budget is with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) (approx. £2.1 billion pounds a year). The ONR and Environment Agency fund themselves through fees. The directorate deals with a wide range of issues from new nuclear to decommissioning.
- NGO Ian Ralls suggested that the amount of money being spent on nuclear power presents a large opportunity cost to other potential sources of energy.

NGOs discussed how the UK will continue to justify public health detriment through a nuclear bill. BEIS outlined the process that weighs the costs and benefits of a reactor, which utilises expert advice. The Secretary of State then takes a decision once a net benefit is clear.

The department is committed to reaching a balance between the targets of nuclear and energy policies. Reaching the 2050 emission reduction target remains a large challenge, which requires a huge national infrastructure project. Due to cost, carbon reduction target, energy security and Brexit, it would be irresponsible to get rid of nuclear technology that is important in electricity generation and energy baseloads.

- Neil Crumpton proposed the introduction of biomass into the grid due to the abundance of biomass supply. He asked for further interaction with BEIS on the matter in order to input into department models.



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

The discussion concluded with a question on contingency measures to the government's nuclear plan. The government has contracts with developers from low carbon contract companies; should there be a failure there will be no cost to the taxpayer.

ACTION POINT 5 – BEIS to distribute Ashley Ibbett's presentation on 'Energy and Decarbonisation policy'.

ACTION POINT 6 – NGOs to comment on the Hitachi-GE Nuclear Energy Ltd's UK Advanced Boiling Water reactor design before the process closes on 15 August.

5. Final comments

The co-chairs brought the Forum to a close, summarising that:

- There is encouragement that the Forum is a beginning point for discussion, but highlighted the need for BEIS to listen to concerns and have greater interaction with the NGOs.
- Asked the Forum to present solid arguments to refute BEIS's nuclear policy, and not just wish them away.
- Asked for a greater NGO focus on the concerns about the government's nuclear policy from an economic and moral issue.

BEIS thanked the NGOs and acknowledged the strengths of the arguments presented, as well as the benefits of having the Forum:

- The co-chairs will work together in preparation for the meeting with Minister Harrington in order to capture the positions presented during the Forum.
- Minister Harrington's will attend the 12 September Forum.

NEXT MEETING – 12 September, Church House, Westminster, SW1P 3NZ.



Attendees

NGOs	
Prof Andrew Blowers	Co-Chair NGO Forum and Chair of Blackwater against New Nuclear Group
Jo Brown	Parents Concerned about Hinkley
Sue Aubrey	Stop Hinkley Campaign
Dr David Lowry	Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates (NWAA)
Ian Ralls	Friends of the Earth Nuclear Network
Mike Taylor	Together Against Sizewell C (TASC)
Rod Donington-Smith	Cumbria Trust
Richard Bramhall	Low Level Radiation Campaign
Neil Crumpton	People Against Wylfa B
Sean Murray	Nuclear-Free Local Authorities
Rita Holmes	Ayrshire Radiation Monitoring Group
Phil Davies	Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates
Regulators	
Donald Urquhart	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Caroline Richards	Specialist (Engagement/Communications) Nuclear New Build, Radioactive Waste and Regulation, Environment Agency
Martin Murray	Nuclear Build Programme Executive Manager, Environment Agency
Dr Janet Wilson	BEIS Committee on Radioactive Waste (CoRWM)
Simon Napper	Radioactive Waste Management, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor
Duncan Flint	Radioactive Waste Management, Media and Campaigns Manager
Bill Hamilton	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority



Department for
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Summary of actions	Owner	Lead official
1: BEIS to circulate to the Forum the latest report on the Security Assessment Principles (SyAPs).	BEIS	BEIS Deputy Director
2: BEIS to distribute links to the whole lifecycle carbon emissions from nuclear energy.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
3: BEIS to provide an update to the next Forum on Euratom.	BEIS	BEIS Deputy Director
4: NGO secretariat to send the letter provided by RB during the meeting to Energy Minister Harrington.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
5: BEIS to distribute Ashley Ibbett's presentation on 'Energy and Decarbonisation policy'.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat
6: NGOs to comment on the Hitachi-GE Nuclear Energy Ltd's UK Advanced Boiling Water reactor design before the process closes on 15 August.	BEIS Secretariat	BEIS Secretariat