



**COMMITTEE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT (CoRWM)  
OPEN PLENARY MINUTES  
16<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

- Venue:** BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria St, London
- Timing:** 16<sup>th</sup> January 11:00 – 15:30
- Chair:** Nigel Thrift
- Members Attending:** Campbell Gemmell, Gregg Butler, Stephen Newson, Janet Wilson, Richard Shaw, Andrew Walters, Andy Hall, Melissa Denecke
- Other Attendees:** Andrew Craze (RWM), Ashley Marsh (Imperial College), Daniel Delort (Andra), Marie-Delphine Salsac (Andra), Roy Payne (GDFWatch), Tim McEwen (McEwen Consulting), Lizzy Moyce (Studsvik), David Lowry (Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates), Phillip Matthews (NuLeAF), Stewart Agar (Imperial College), Mariana Ghosh (CoRWM Secretariat), Kathryn Yates (CoRWM Secretariat)
- Apologies:** Julia West, Stephen Tromans

## **Summary**

CoRWM's Open Plenary took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 1 Victoria Street in London. CoRWM heard updates from subgroups and discussed the publication of BEIS (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) *Working With Communities: Implementing Geological Disposal* policy documents. CoRWM were joined by Daniel Delort from Andra who gave a presentation describing the siting process for the Cigeo geological disposal project, and Andra's involvement with community engagement.

**Item 1. Chair's Introductory Comments**

1. The Chair discussed the publication of BEIS (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) '*Working With Communities: implementing geological disposal*' policy documents on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018. These set out an approach in which the UK government and Northern Ireland Executive will work with communities in the UK and Northern Ireland that are willing to participate in the siting process for a geological disposal facility.
2. The Chair stated that Brexit is a major priority for BEIS.
3. The Chair explained that at the Plenary Meeting in March 2019 CoRWM will discuss ways in which they handle public engagement.
4. The Chair explained that member Melissa Denecke has resigned as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. CoRWM thanked Melissa for her work and congratulated her on her new role at the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency).

**Item 2. Declaration of Interests**

5. Member Andy Hall has been appointed to the Welsh Government's Nuclear Task and Finish Group.
6. Member Gregg Butler has a role within the National Nuclear Laboratory working with Terrapower.

**Item 3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Plenary**

7. Member Campbell Gemmell provided the following amendment to the November 2018 Open Plenary (CoRWM doc 3512):

*Item 2. Declaration of Interests*

*'Member Campbell Gemmell stated he has been appointed by the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for ECCLR (Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform) to Chair a Review of Air Quality Policy in Scotland, until May 2019. The Committee congratulated Campbell Gemmell and understand this will not result in any conflict with CoRWM.'*

**Action for the Secretariat to make these changes.**

8. It was suggested that in the panel discussion section from the November 2018 Open Plenary (CoRWM doc 3512), presenters names could be used instead of writing 'Representative from Magnox' and 'Representative from Dounreay'. **Action for the Secretariat to make these changes.**

**Item 4. Update on CoRWM Activities and Plans****Subgroup 1: Working with Communities and Communications**

9. Subgroup 1 updated that they met with BEIS on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018, and with BEIS and RWM (Radioactive Waste Management) on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019.
10. Subgroup 1 explained they are pleased that BEIS Working With Communities policy documents have been published.
11. Subgroup 1 stated they have been discussing roles of organisations involved at this stage of the GDF programme and have clarified that BEIS is the policy leader, RWM is the programme developer, and that CoRWM will continue to provide independent scrutiny.
12. Subgroup 1 explained that they will provide a response to RWM's Site Evaluation Document which was published on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018. RWM are hosting public events in February and March aimed at helping attendees to understand the context of RWM's Site Evaluation for a GDF. CoRWM will attend these events as observers.

**Subgroup 2: Safety Case and Geology**

13. Subgroup 2 explained that CoRWM met with RWM on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and saw RWM's mock website ahead of the launch of the Site Evaluation process.
14. Subgroup 2 met with the BGS (British Geological Survey) on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to discuss the National Geological Screening programme in which the BGS have looked at UK geology on a coarse scale. The BGS showed CoRWM a mock version of their website which is now live. Subgroup 2 were interested to understand how the BGS planned to deal with enquiries regarding this programme and were pleased to hear that the BGS will answer queries through their existing queries system which is robust.
15. Subgroup 2 explained that CoRWM will be responding to RWM's Site Evaluation document.
16. Feedback was given that the BGS website could be more user-friendly.
17. A question was raised asking for clarification about the queries process within the BGS. Subgroup 2 explained that each query the BGS receives will be logged, that a timeframe for a response will be provided, and the delivery of the response monitored.

**Subgroup 3: Planning and Regulation**

18. Subgroup 3 explained that they submitted a response to the NPS (National Policy Statement) for geological disposal infrastructure consultation which closed on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Subgroup 3 met with BEIS on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 to discuss the NPS progress and BEIS stated that the NPS is being finalised.
19. A question was raised about the timeframe for the NPS, and subgroup 3 responded that they did not know this.

**Subgroup 4: GDF Delivery**

20. Subgroup 4 explained that they were initially set up to scrutinise RWM's organisational development and eventual transition to a Site Licensed Company (SLC). Following a recent 'readiness review' further transitional development issues have now become a matter for the GDPB (Geological Disposal Programme Board) to be monitored at the highest level.
21. Subgroup 4 then discussed that RWM have made changes to their organisation at project and programme management levels. Subgroup 4 proposed a meeting with RWM to learn about progress and any issues with these changes. Andrew Craze from RWM stated he could facilitate this.
- Action for subgroup 4 to correspond with Andrew Craze.**

**Subgroup 5: Scottish Government Activities**

22. Subgroup 5's Chair explained that they met with the Scottish Government as well as representatives from NDA, RWM, SEPA and ONR - for a HAWSIG (Higher Activity Waste Strategy Implementation Group) meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018. HAWSIG takes a long-term view of HAW in Scotland and CoRWM provided advice on the strategy.
23. Subgroup 5's Chair attended a Scottish Nuclear Sites meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2018 in which they heard about the project management for decommissioning nuclear submarines, and received site updates from Torness and Hunterston B.
24. Subgroup 5's Chair explained that the Scottish Government has received an FOI (Freedom of Information) request regarding Australian radioactive waste, which is being repatriated. The Scottish Government will advise CoRWM when the information is released.
25. SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) has produced a Nuclear Sector Plan which is under consultation until the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

Subgroup 5 will be represented at the SEPA/SG meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> January, and CoRWM has drafted a consultation response.

26. A concern was raised regarding the repatriated waste mentioned under 3, in light of the current changes in Parliament. Subgroup 5's Chair responded that there is some uncertainty on the material liable to be exported, as negotiations have not yet been concluded.

### **Subgroup 6: Welsh Government Activities**

27. Subgroup 6 updated that they provided feedback to the draft Welsh Government's Working With Communities document ahead of its expected publication on that day (16<sup>th</sup> January 2019). The Welsh Government asked CoRWM for responses to FAQ's regarding geological disposal and CoRWM responded by producing six Position Papers which are available on CoRWM's website.
28. CoRWM members agreed that their Position Papers have shown how comprehensive CoRWM have been in their studies and have highlighted the importance of knowledge management.
29. Subgroup 6 explained that RWM have a Site Evaluation document for Wales and will be awaiting responses.
30. A concern was raised regarding considerations of a deliberate ('terrorist') threat to transportation of material. CoRWM replied that this point is covered in their Position Paper 'Transport considerations for radioactive materials' which is published on their webpage.

### **Subgroup 7: Storage of Waste, Spent Fuel, and Materials**

31. Subgroup 7 updated about recent meetings they have had with the NDA (Nuclear Decommissioning Authority). The NDA have no clear way of reporting decommissioning progress which is clear to the public and to stakeholders, and so are working on methods to do this. The NDA are hoping to have this in place by the end of 2019. Subgroup 7 stated the importance of ensuring progress reporting can be traceable to science.
32. Subgroup 7 discussed the closure of THORP (Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant) which is now in a state of POCO (Post Operational Clean Out). The THORP programme has ended as expected which is a positive achievement.
33. Subgroup 7 discussed that the Magnox programme is on schedule to stop by 2020.

34. Subgroup 7 explained that they have provided scrutiny of the ongoing storage of spent fuel from the AGR's (Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactors) and commented that capabilities appear to be robust.
35. Subgroup 7 had noted BEIS/NDA ongoing considerations of how depleted uranium could be disposed of and would comment in due course.

#### **Subgroup 8: Euratom**

36. CoRWM discussed putting subgroup 8 on hold as there are currently no ongoing work items within this subgroup.

#### **Item 5. Presentation from Daniel Delort (Andra)**

37. Daniel Delort from Andra gave a presentation to the group about the Cigeo project update and Andra's relationship with hosting communities.
38. Daniel Delort explained the Public Debate regulatory process in France and presents an example of the 2013's Debate. Information on this debate (documents, reports and videos) can be found on Andra's website. For this debate, a Citizen Conference was organized by the Public Debate commission and was very helpful.

#### **Item 6. Questions from the Public**

39. A question was asked about lessons learned for Andra so far with process of Cigeo. Daniel Delort replied that the process moves slowly and needs time. Legislation is evolving with the process, roles and responsibilities must be clear.
40. A question was asked if the community approach for the Cigeo project is comparable to other French infrastructure projects. Daniel's Delort's answer was yes. Meanwhile Daniel Delort explained that nuclear projects always need a specific attitude and that Cigeo has been unique from the beginning.
41. A question was asked about the research process for the facility, and Daniel Delort explained that this process is driven by the project needs. An illustration of the dependence can be found in Andra's Project Development Plan which is available online.
42. A question was asked about how Andra came to locate a site for the Cigeo project. Daniel Delort explained that the siting process began in 1991 was aiming to locate an underground research laboratory (URL) to study the feasibility of the DGR (Deep Geological Repository) option (one of the 3 investigated in France in the 90's). It was based on a voluntary process led by French Deputies who travelled around France to engage with communities and explain the programme. There were four volunteer communities, two of

them grouped their candidature, and finally, only the license application for the construction of a URL at Bure site was granted.

**Item 7. AOB**

43.No AOB.

**Item 8. Next Meeting**

Please contact [corwm@beis.gov.uk](mailto:corwm@beis.gov.uk) for details on how to attend CoRWM plenaries or visit [CoRWMs webpage](#) or [meetings calendar](#).

**Appendix A – Abbreviations**

BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BGS	British Geological Survey
CoRWM	Committee on Radioactive Waste Management
EA	Environment Agency
GDPB	Geological Disposal Programme Board
gDSSC	Generic Disposal Systems Safety Case
GDF	Geological Disposal Facility
HAW	Higher Activity Wastes
KORAD	Korean Radioactive Waste Agency
ILW	Intermediate Level Waste
LLW	Low Level Waste
LLWR	Low Level Waste Repository
LoC	Letters of Compliance
NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPS	National Policy Statement
NRW	Natural Resource Wales
NSD	Near Surface Disposal
ONR	Office for Nuclear Regulation
RWM	Radioactive Waste Management
UKRWI	United Kingdom Radioactive Waste Inventory
WWC	Working with Communities



**Appendix B - Actions**

Action 1. Secretariat to update minutes from the November 2018 Plenary section 'Declaration of Interests'.

Action 2. Secretariat to make amendments to minutes from CoRWM Open Plenary in November 2018 to include names instead of 'Representative from Magnox' and 'Representative from Dounreay'.

Action 3. For subgroup 4 to liaise with Andrew Craze (RWM) to arrange a meeting.