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The UK’s 5.7 million SMEs are the lifeblood of our economy, employing 16 million people and accounting for £1.9 trillion of turnover. They work hard, day in and day out, creating jobs, opportunities and greater choice for consumers and helping to keep the UK a great place to start and grow a business.

That is why this Government’s modern Industrial Strategy is fully behind them and we are working, through initiatives like the SME action plan, to build a Britain in which they can continue to thrive.

Before entering politics, I ran a small business and the challenges I faced are the very same ones that we in Government are improving. We are doing this via the continued hard work of professionals from across functions and from central Government Departments and the wider public sector, all with the support of companies large and small. Each Department is also publishing its own SME action plan detailing both generic and specific actions that we all commit to delivering over the next three years.

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) represents a significant proportion of the BEIS budget in its role of dealing with our Civil Nuclear Legacy and has its own target agreed with the Cabinet Office.

I am delighted to reflect on the significant achievements to date and was very pleased when last year NDA decided to further challenge itself, its group and its supply chain by volunteering to increase its previous target to 33% by 2022.

Given the complexity, scale and impact of NDA’s mission, I know this will be a very challenging target but I will continue to do all I can to support its efforts.

As Small Business Procurement Champion, I will be regularly reviewing progress against this Plan and our targets. I look forward to continuing to help shape the commercial agenda from within my Department but also support colleagues across the rest of Government in delivering our target to spend £1 in every £3 with SMEs, who together represent the backbone of our economy.

Kelly Tolhurst MP

Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Small Businesses, Consumers and Corporate Responsibilities
Like the Minister, I am very proud of the achievements of the NDA group and of the exceptional support that we gain from local stakeholders and companies of all sizes.

The NDA group exists in some of the most geographically remote locations across England, Scotland and Wales. These locations were very carefully chosen, and, over the decades, the complexity of the decommissioning challenge has had very positive impacts on the local economies and communities upon which we rely and from whom we gain exceptional support.

The SME agenda for us is far more than just a target, it’s about us striving to be the best client we can be and successfully delivering challenging projects which directly affect this and future generations.

We aspire to have a healthy, vibrant and dynamic supply chain not just for today but for decades to come. SMEs are a key component of our supply chain; they frequently bring new and challenging ideas, are responsive and often offer us exceptional value for money.

Additionally, they are at the very heart of local economies and communities, and their size is not a blocker to aspiration or achievement. I am delighted when I hear of SMEs who are successful, regionally, nationally and also internationally.

Nuclear decommissioning is a challenging and rewarding sector. We make no apology for striving for the highest performance from ourselves and from those who work with us across our group. SMEs play a vital role in helping deliver our mission both directly and also indirectly, working with other SMEs but frequently with other national and international companies.

Our new SME target and associated action plan will be a challenge to deliver but I am determined that we will continue to strive to deliver the best outcomes for the taxpayers’ significant investment and for the wider UK economy. We have programmes that last, in some cases, decades and support for our sector is a great springboard for work abroad but also to support other domestic nuclear clients – both military and civil.

Please continue to challenge me and my team to deliver on our promises and if you have any other areas where you think we can and should do more, please don’t hesitate to contact us, details of how are in Appendix IV.

Kate Ellis
1. Introduction

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by BEIS. It was formed in 2005 with responsibility/accountability for dealing with the majority of the UK’s public sector nuclear liability created since the birth of the nuclear sector in 1947. NDA’s mission is expected to continue into the next century.

The NDA group comprises 17 sites across England, Scotland and Wales. These sites are grouped, regulated and controlled under 4 Site Licence Companies (SLCs). The SLCs are responsible for the safe operation and decommissioning of the historic nuclear activities and, in doing so, they make very extensive use of the supply chain. As well as the SLCs, the NDA group also comprises a number of specialist wholly owned subsidiaries, responsible for a wide range of activities including rail and shipping services, insurance, property and also developing solutions for dealing with the long-term disposal of high and intermediate level waste for England and Wales.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 2 – NDA group governance and relationship hierarchy structure

2. Supply Chain Strategy and SME action plan objectives

NDA’s published supply chain development strategic objective is “to ensure that the supply chain available to the NDA estate is optimised to enable a safe, affordable, cost-effective, innovative and dynamic market to support our mission, and for the NDA estate to be seen as a nuclear client of choice.”

Our supply chain strategy is “to help maintain and, where necessary, create and develop a healthy, vibrant, effective and competitive supply chain. Such a supply chain will be successful, deliver value for money, be affordable, and manage risk and opportunities appropriately.”

Our aspirations associated with SMEs are included within this overarching strategy but the detail of specific actions and interventions are contained within this SME Action Plan.

This document provides a principal vision of how we will support SMEs to work for the NDA group as part of the wider supply chain. Some actions will be developed by NDA while others that are more site specific, reflecting local needs are developed by the group businesses. More details will be available from each business website, one of our corporate actions, and selected highlights are included in Appendix ii.
In addition, NDA’s role is to act as a conduit to promote and incorporate and influence best practice within the group and wider Government.

Due to the scale and complexity of the work being commissioned, it is not always feasible to contract directly with SMEs and therefore indirect involvement through subcontracting or joint venture opportunities is actively encouraged through a number of initiatives.

The key action plan objectives are:
- Leadership advocacy and challenge
- Support
- Efficiency
- Transparency
- Data and information

Each area is defined in more detail later, along with specific actions, information as to how it supports the SME agenda and timescales.

3. NDA group spend

The NDA group has an annual budget of circa £3.3bn with an annual supply chain expenditure of circa £1.9bn (which includes circa £220m of inter-group trading), with £1.7bn entering the supply chain at Tier 2.

Each business is subject to Public Procurement Regulations and the NDA Corporate Centre is responsible for enhancing these with guidance and best practice for the benefit of the taxpayer and supply chain with a particular focus on small and medium size enterprises (SMEs).

Each business publishes its own procurement pipeline, in line with Government guidelines, and develops its own commercial strategy based on the specific requirements for its site. The group procures a wide range of goods and services from stationery to complex one-of-a-kind nuclear facilities, with values ranging from £10s to £100m. Durations also vary dramatically from just in time through to projects and programmes lasting decades.

Figure 3 – illustration of the structure of the NDA group supply chain
Figure 4 – category spend analysis for third party spend commissioned by the Site Licence Companies which in 2017/18 accounted for 95% of the spend

With such a wide variety of requirements delivered across often geographically remote locations, there is no standard company that we aspire to work with. However we expect our contractors to share our high standards (environmental, safety, security and ethical) and to have a passion for doing the right thing and for delivering goods and services which are affordable and deliver best value for the taxpayers.
4. Our SME spend

NDA measures direct and indirect SME spend taken from data supplied quarterly from suppliers representing the top 70% of spend across the group. The NDA analyses trends across the NDA group and within individual businesses. Total SME spend is reported quarterly to HM Government and annual statistics published within this document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Direct SME spend</th>
<th>Indirect SME spend</th>
<th>Overall SME spend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5 – NDA group corporate SME spend target and actual by fiscal year

Figure 6 – NDA group corporate SME spend breakdown showing and actual by fiscal year
5. **NDA’s SME Journey so far**

- **Indirect SME data collection commenced**
- **NDA SME Champion appointed**
- **Revision to payment terms**
- **Supply Chain Charter launched**
- **First NDA Supply Chain Event held, 250 attendees**
- **NDA Supply Chain Awards launched**
- **SME Mentor Scheme launched**
- **SME Minister’s Award launched**
- **Health of the Supply Chain report published**
- **SME Regional Steering Groups formed**
- **SME guides published**
- **SME spend target increased to 33%**
- **Common simplified contract**
- **Standardised selection process**
- **SME Regional Steering Groups formed**
- **SME Spend Event 2018, 1,600 attendees**
- **New NDA SME Action Plan approved and published**

**Where it all began in 2010…**

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Figure 7 – NDA group SME journey
6. **NDA Pipeline**

The individual members of NDA group have published procurement plans for a number of years, in some cases since 2005. These plans include details of future procurement activities and they have been important to help the supply chain understand and prepare for forthcoming requirements, projects and programmes.

Our SME communities have welcomed this level of information as it helps to reduce the burden and complexity associated with trying to understand the client’s needs across a complex group where access to key individuals is restricted due to safety and security issues.

Since 2005, we have evolved and improved these individual plans, often with constructive challenge from our SMEs.

Last year, NDA adopted Government’s standard “Commercial Pipeline” across our entire group which is progressively improving the consistency of data irrespective of which site or organisation has generated the pipeline.

These pipelines seek to look forward 18 months and are updated on a quarterly basis to ensure that they are as robust as possible. Whilst every effort is made to ensure they are accurate, the nature of our work means that changes are inevitable.

NDA will continue to improve the quality and relevance of these pipelines and any feedback on potential improvements should be directed to either the authors of the pipelines or the NDA’s SME team.

Our pipelines are published along with award information on [http://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder](http://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder).

Over the last 2 years, NDA, working with a small number of Tier 2 contractors, has undertaken a pilot study to explore the issues associated with the Tier 2 contractors also publishing their opportunities. This work helped prove the value in broadening out the “indirect” opportunities which are particularly important for SMEs.

Last year, Government and the NDA group imposed a requirement that all major new contracts above £5m should advertise subcontracting opportunities on [http://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder](http://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder). These obligations will progressively be included in tenders and awards and the NDA group will proactively monitor how these are being delivered.

7. **SME Action Plan**

The actions detailed in this document have been split into 5 key objectives, each with sub-objectives:

1. Leadership/advocacy and challenge
2. SME supplier support
3. Efficiency
4. Transparency
5. Data and information

Details of the individual group company action plans will be available on each website - a few key actions have been included here for information.
### 7.1 Leadership/advocacy and challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>NDA Corporate Objective - annual target agreed and reported to the NDA Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>setting stretching targets for the NDA group helps us to aim high, and to be accountable to the supply chain as well as to HMG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 2</th>
<th>SME Champion – specific role with clear responsibilities which support the SME Agenda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>central accountability for influencing the initiatives and targets agreed and set for the NDA group, influencing HMG policy, and sharing best practice throughout the wider public procurement network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 3</th>
<th>Resolving Problems and Disputes with SMEs – providing a back-stop for SMEs to raise concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>providing a route to raise concerns which have not been resolved with the contracting NDA business, challenging processes or onerous conditions thus enabling SMEs to compete for and secure contracts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.2 SME supplier support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>National Supply Chain Event - delivery of the largest nuclear network event of its kind in Europe, hosted by NDA with support from CCS, MOD and UKTI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>promotion of networking and marketing opportunities, including meeting current and potential buyers, hearing about pipeline opportunities and about the challenges facing the NDA group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>Hosted annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 2</th>
<th>Supply Chain Awards - promoting best practice and rewarding innovation in the supply chain across the NDA group, accessible to all companies. Includes a specific SME Minister’s Award to help raise the profile of SMEs working within the Nuclear industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>award categories and criteria help the supply chain to identify, promote and celebrate good examples of work across the NDA group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>Hosted in conjunction with the NDA Supply Chain Event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 3</th>
<th>Improve Direct Communication - making better use of different communication platforms including social media to engage with the market and to deliver messages targeted at SMEs such as new business opportunities, events, training &amp; initiatives from Government Depts, industry bodies and education including Innovate UK, Knowledge Transfer Network, BEC Business Cluster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How this supports:</strong></td>
<td>faster dissemination of messages, as well as providing a place for direct engagement between SMEs, business to business, support agencies etc, raising the profile of the NDA group and the opportunities it offers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline:</strong></td>
<td>2019 and ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.3 Efficiency

**Objective 1**

**Routes to Market** – strategies provide opportunities for SMEs to bid for new opportunities using suitable routes to market such as Dynamic Purchasing Systems, LINC (Liaise, Innovate, Network and Collaborate) etc.

**How this supports:** adopting alternative routes to market in some instances results in a leaner process, reduction in time and cost associated with bidding for some contracts, provides an opportunity to innovate and engage early with the commissioners, provides an opportunity to collaborate.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Objective 2**

**Making it Easier to Engage with the NDA Group** - standardisation of requirements, clear and unambiguous common documentation such as terms and conditions and tender documentation, and standardisation of process encourage SMEs to bid for NDA group opportunities

**How this supports:** removal of ambiguous, arduous or onerous conditions and processes to enable SMEs to compete for and secure contracts.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

### 7.4 Transparency

**Objective 1**

**SME Targeted Training and Webinars** – hosted by the NDA group or other relevant organisations on topics requested by SMEs including specific contracting opportunities, tender writing and other improvement initiatives

**How this supports:** de-mystifying how to win business within the NDA group, acting as a critical friend to improvement initiatives, increasing the proportion of SMEs successfully winning business.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Objective 2**

**Monitoring the Transparency of Opportunities** – comprehensive procurement pipelines provide a forward plan of potential opportunities within the NDA group, monitoring and challenging the transparency of opportunities further down the supply chain

**How this supports:** comprehensive procurement pipelines enable SMEs to identify potential business opportunities at least 18 months in advance so that they can prepare and align their business plans. This also ensures that there is transparency of opportunities to work with prime contractors and monitors the delivery of commitments made in contracts.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Objective 3**

**Performance Data** – publication of NDA group spend and performance data in the Annual Supply Chain Metrics report

**How this supports:** transparency of the NDA group’s spend and performance helps to provide accountability to all our stakeholders.

**Timeline:** June 2019 and then annually
### 7.5 Data and information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How this supports</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Objective 1** | SME Database - create a comprehensive listing of SMEs and other suppliers, engaged either directly or indirectly with the NDA group | by supporting the identification of SME companies within the supply chain in order to ensure only verified SME spend is reported as well as giving large companies the opportunity to identify existing SMEs in the market.  
**Timeline:** September 2019 and refreshed six monthly | |
| **Objective 2** | SME Spend Database – creation of a database to enable NDA to monitor the spend profile against SMEs over a period of time | being able to identify trends will enable the NDA group to monitor the sustainability of the supply chain in terms of SMEs and to take action as necessary.  
**Timeline:** September 2019 and refreshed quarterly | |
| **Objective 3** | Distribution of SMEs - creating a visual distribution map of SMEs across the NDA group | demonstrates clearly the distribution of the SME supply chain for the NDA group.  
**Timeline:** May 2019 and then annually | |
8. **NDA SME hierarchy structure**

The organisational chart below depicts the relationship between the NDA group, our parent department, other parts of HMG and our SME Minister.
Appendix i

Direct SME supplier distribution in UK

Data taken from D&B for 2018/19
Case Studies

**LINC (Liaise, Innovate, Network & Collaborate)**

This initiative was set up by Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd (DSRL) to encourage SMEs at a local and national level to collaborate with each other to deliver innovative solutions that support the Dounreay decommissioning programme. By offering the scheme to SME companies, it is intended to ensure greater opportunities for growth, removing barriers which may be perceived when engaging with larger companies (risk of staff/expertise poaching, buy out, IP, etc).

Work packages are identified focusing on the various challenges faced across the site and details are sent directly to any company registered on the site.

SMEs are invited to self-register on the DSRL website with details of the company, areas of expertise and contact details. Since launch in 2017, over 230 SME companies have registered on the site and 7 opportunities have been offered. Only 4 contracts have been awarded to date, all won by SMEs, 3 are still to be announced.

One of the winning companies has since progressed to work with one of DSRL’s main subcontractors and has now completed a large on-site cladding job.

The scheme is increasing the number of opportunities to be included and the outline idea has been adopted and further developed by Sellafield Ltd to meet its requirements.

**Business Service Market Place**

Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) established a Dynamic Purchasing System known as the Business Services Marketplace in order to maximise the opportunities for either local or SME companies to access opportunities within the NDA Group that were perhaps too difficult or unavailable (due to the time and scale of framework opportunities). This particular system is designed to deliver professional services in 13 categories across all business areas. This scheme is due to run until 2020.

Since launch, 95 suppliers have qualified across all categories including 59 SMEs (62%).

The scheme has delivered considerable benefit to both customers and the supply chain.

Other Dynamic Purchasing Systems are now being developed across the NDA Group aimed at other sectors of business.
Business Open Sessions

Sellafield initiated a series of open sessions for all businesses starting in September 2018, with a schedule of dates and venues across the North West, where companies can book an appointment to discuss anything from how to do business with Sellafield Ltd to any issues arising from working with the company. Each slot is 20 mins and, to date, 57 businesses have had appointments, of which 37 are SMEs. A programme of future meetings has been published for 2019/20. Many of these meetings have been with companies who have not worked with Sellafield in the past and have had difficulty in understanding complex Government procurements.

The open discussions are intended to explain how to do business with Sellafield, answer any questions, receive feedback – both positive and negative and use these sessions to further feed changes to the SME action plan, feeding in to the recently launched SME forum and ongoing Tier 2 (main subcontractor) working groups and influencing internal processes and procedures.

Contract Terms

Magnox continues to promote SME initiatives as part of its Supply Chain Strategic Plan. In particular, simplified contract terms for below-threshold purchases and modified payment terms will ease cash-flow concerns which are a significant issue for SMEs. Magnox also continue to engage directly with SMEs across all programme and project streams. Specifically in this space, SMEs won the contract for the 6m³ Contract Box contract and MILWEP (Modular Intermediate Level Waste Encapsulation Plant) contract, both examples of where an SME beat competition from larger industry players to win significant business.

Magnox continues to engage with our larger Tier 2 suppliers as part of our Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) agenda, seeking to guide and influence their onward decision-making on awarding business for Magnox contracts, with an emphasis on engaging with SMEs. The success of this process is demonstrated by our continued above-target achievement rate for expenditure with SMEs. As part of the ongoing future commitment to the Government SME agenda, Magnox is in active discussions with the rest of the NDA group to understand how to enhance the success of the DSRL and Sellafield LINC programme and expand the use of the LLWR BSM Dynamic Purchasing System to the rest of the NDA group.
Appendix iii  Feedback and responses

What people say about the events and initiatives we offer...

**NDA Supply Chain Event**

“PDL were really pleased to have the opportunity to attend the NDA Supply Chain Event in 2018. It was the 4th year we had exhibited and the event has gone from strength to strength, with the quality of the attendees and the volume of people increasing each year. As an SME, the ability to meet with clients and collaborators at one massively supported and low-cost event, allows us to deliver our innovation to the NDA Estate without breaking the bank.”

“Pretty much the whole of the North West nuclear industry attends.”

“It was a superb event and a great venue and, as a potential new entrant to the game, it was the equivalent of 6 months marketing in a day.”

“If you want a true value-for-money event then you can’t beat the NDA Supply Chain Event. Lots of exhibitors and lots of people focused on networking, engagement and innovation. Just what you want for a very effective day.”

**NDA Supply Chain Awards**

***Winner of the Minister’s Award 2016:***

“Since winning in 2016, we’ve gone on to win 7 local, regional and national awards. We’ve also been named one of the UK’s Top 100 apprentice providers for 2 consecutive years.

We feel that as a small business, we’re really punching above our weight in this area, sitting alongside much larger organisations.”

***Winner of the SME Innovation Award 2016:***

“Winning the NDA innovation award in 2016 made selling the benefits of our product much easier. Nuclear customers are prepared to read the literature and the good press we have had about the product, knowing we have had the award from the NDA.”

***Highly commended of the Minister’s Award 2017:***

“We were glad to have received the award, and, since winning it, have had work from other Magnox sites with whom we have little history. It is a useful thing to have. In discussions with potential customers, this award serves to evidence our credibility and is generally as a good conversation piece. We are proud of the work we have done on this project and the award is a nice recognition of it.”
NDA Mentor Scheme

“It's an invaluable experience. To have the chance to work with such a senior level of insight and input... It's a rare opportunity to talk so candidly and share the SME perspective and how strategic, even national decisions impact on a business like ours.”

“I've been re-energised by the enthusiasm of my mentee and I'm learning new things about my style and it's stimulated ideas for my own business too.”

“If you're prepared to spend the time and listen to what your mentor says, it is really worth it. You need to be prepared to take action yourself.”
Useful links

NDA Corporate Reports
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=nuclear-decommissioning-authority&publication_type=corporate-reports

NDA Website
https://www.gov.uk/nda

Procurement at NDA
NDA Corporate Centre  https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nuclear-decommissioning-authority/about/procurement
Email : Procurement.inbox@nda.gov.uk

Under this page you will find links to :

- Tendering for contracts and transparency
- Contract terms and conditions
- SME Steering Group guides
- NDA Charter
- SME Definition
- NDA Supply Chain Event

Each NDA group company has links within its procurement pages on the websites, showing the local activities and actions they take to support SMEs.

Sellafield  https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/sellafield-ltd
Email : supply.chain.enquiries@sellafielddesites.com

Email : procurement@llwrsite.com

Magnox  https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/magnoxltd
Email : Magnox.supplier.queries@magnoxsites.com

Dounreay  https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/dounreay
Email : commercial.services@dounreay.com

Any queries regarding this SME Action Plan, please contact NDA Commercial Standards
Email : CommercialStandards@nda.gov.uk