

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT (CORWM) PLENARY
5TH FEBRUARY, LONDON**

Secretariat

Present: (CoRWM): : Laurence Williams (Chair), Francis Livens (Deputy Chair), Stephen Newson, John Rennilson, Lynda Warren, Simon Harley, Brian Clark, Gregg Butler, Rebecca Lunn, Janet Wilson, Helen Peters, Paul Davis, Mojisola Olutade (secretariat), Dharshana Sridhar (secretariat),

Apologies: Nil

Agenda Item 1: Meeting Open and Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed the Committee and members of the public who were observing the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Declarations of Interest

2. The following Members declared issues of potential interest to the Committee:
 - Gregg Butler reported that he was reviewing a report on thorium fuel cycles for NEA-OECD with payment to IDM Ltd.
 - Helen Peters reported that she was joining Gregg Butler on “Developing the Case for Proportionate Regulatory Controls in the UK”, that involves DECC, NDA, EA, SEPA and ONR.
 - Francis Livens reported that he had been promoted to Interim Director of Dalton Nuclear Institute.
 - Becky Lunn reported that she had been awarded £580,000 from Innovate UK and Nuclear technologies, to develop a Detectable Grouting system.
3. The Chair noted these declarations and stated that he did not believe any constituted a conflict of interest.

Agenda Item 3: Chair’s Update

Website

4. The Secretariat provided an update on the status of the Committee’s website and recurrent difficulties with updating the documents online. There have been bureaucracy issues relating to the new secretariat members being given the necessary training and account to update the Committee’s website which were finally in the process of being resolved. One member of the secretariat had been trained and was waiting to be given an account and access to update on the Gov.UK site.
5. The chair also informed that all CoRWM’s old documents had gone to the National Archives.

Feedback from Sponsors meeting on 14th January

6. The Chair reported that he had given the Sponsor Departments an update on the development of the Committee's work programme for 2015-18. The Sponsors were generally content with what CoRWM was planning to do. The Chair reported that the publication of the Committee's work programme would most likely be caught up in Purdah.
7. The Triennial Review had been discussed at the Sponsor's meeting and the Chair reported that he had expressed some concerns on how the review would be undertaken. Sponsors had assured him that the Head of the Triennial Review team would not be from OND.
8. The Chairman reported that the Triennial Review Consultation was in the public domain and the consultation period would finish on the 10th of March. The review is unlikely to be completed and the report published before the next administration is in post.
9. The Chair had expressed his concern over the end of the current term for some of the Members of the Committee, especially given the time needed to recruit new Members. DECC was optimistic that there would be a response to the Triennial Review in time to start to consider new appointments, re-appointments and extension of contracts.
10. Finally the Chair noted that the letter sent out to all members detailing the process of the consultation had made it clear that Members can reach out to their contacts, so they can respond adequately to the consultation.

Triennial Review

11. The Chair asked Members for their views on whether CoRWM as a Committee should respond to the Consultation. One Member indicated that CoRWM in the past, had not put in a response to its own Triennial Review. The secretariat confirmed that the Cabinet Office had confirmed that the Committee can respond to its own review.
12. Members agreed that the Committee should respond to the Consultation rather than individual responses from Members. It was decided that the response should be based on the Committee's effectiveness with supporting references. The Committee agreed that the supporting references should be factual with examples e.g West Cumbria. The Committee also agreed that the response should emphasise that the cost of CoRWM to Government is low compared to getting the same level of expertise from consultancies. The Committee noted that it represents a collective knowledge that is available to ministers that cannot be found anywhere else. CoRWM noted that it cannot

be replaced by regulators, as regulators do not have the powers to scrutinise Government policy.

Action 1: Members to meet in February to draft response to the Triennial Review Consultation and this will be reviewed at the March meeting

13. The Chairman noted that the Committee had not had an opportunity to meet with the MOD to discuss its radioactive waste management issues.

Action 2 : Secretariat to follow up on arranging the meeting with MOD radioactive waste management team

Agenda Item 4: Sub- groups Updates

Geological screening as led by Rebecca Lunn. (RL)

14. It was reported that progress was being made on “Screening”. RL reported that draft guidance documents had been put to RWM’s Technical Advisory Panel. The draft guidance has defined geological safety attributes and each of these attributes will be accompanied by a fact sheet. The aim is to have the guidance drafted and out in Spring and for it to be published by the end of the year.

15. RL expressed concerns about whom the guidance was for. She reported that RWM was thinking of having just one document, which is going to be very technical and might not be very good for the general public. The Committee thought that there might be a need for more than one document. The first would be describing where the potential host rocks might be and written in language that the general public could understand and another more technical document aimed at the BGS.

16. The Committee concluded that CoRWM should give advice to RWM and DECC that there should be one document that describes the outputs, which is publicly accessible and understandable by the public and the other document focused on the technical geological information. CoRWM should advise RWM to test for public understandability prior to its publication.

Action 3: CoRWM to provide advice to RWM and DECC on the structure of the proposed National Geological Screening Guidance.

17. The view of the sub-committee was that information to be given to a community wishing to engage in the process should be founded on the GDF safety case, as geological information alone will not enable them to form a view on the capability of their area to host a GDF. It seemed to the Sub-group that the proposed documents were focused on geological information alone.

18. The Committee believed that the question that needed to be asked was: “Are the people, who are to be involved with this process and use it with potential host communities able to understand it well?” If not, there is the danger that the whole process will be compromised.
19. The Committee believed that it was vitally important to be clear on who the Guidance was for, and how the outputs in the Guidance are specified. The Committee agreed it needed to have sight of the draft Guidance document.

Action 4 The Secretariat to arrange a meeting with RWM to discuss the Draft National Geological Screening Guidance.

Community Representation working group as led by John Rennilson (JR)

20. JR reported that the CRWG aims to address the key issues of;
 - The definition of a “Community”;
 - Community representation;
 - Test of public support; and
 - Community investment.
21. It was reported that membership of the CWRG was by invitation rather than based on open advertisement of positions. The group meets on a voluntary basis with the secretariat being provided by DECC supported by a contractor, “Local Partnerships”. BC noted that transparency of the work of the Committee was vital.
22. It was noted that although many of the members of the CRWG might have the experience of taking on medium to large projects, their knowledge in terms of defining a community is limited. It was felt that the CWRG would benefit from additional expertise in the area of community representation. It was also reported that as there was lack of knowledge in the CRWG on what the whole GDF process is all about, DECC would be holding a one to one meeting with the members of the group, so as to educate them about the process.
23. CoRWM suggested that the Sub-group should make DECC aware of the need for the CWRG to
 - broaden its expertise on community relationships especially between different tiers of government;
 - ensure that papers should be made readily available;
 - allow members of the Public to sit in at meetings; and

- have a website so that the public can have information on what CRWG is doing, in order for the openness and transparency policy as outlined in the White Paper to be delivered.

24. It was noted that the Terms of Reference of the CRWG were still not on the “.gov website”

25. It was confirmed that these points have been made to DECC already.

26. The point was raised on the need to draw DECC’s attention to the 3 tiers of government.

Action 5: JR/BC to meet with DECC before the next meeting of the CRWG, to convey CoRWM’s current views.

Regulatory Review as led by Helen Peters (HP)

27. It was reported that there has been little progress on this topic. The secretariat reported that it had contacted ONR with a request for a meeting but it was still awaiting a response. The Committee was concerned about ONR’s lack of engagement with CoRWM.

28. HP reported that the subgroup is concerned about the progress on the approach to licensing and on the need to feed into other workstreams such as the drafting of the NPS.

29. The Committee agreed that there needs coordination of all the work streams programmes. The Committee needs to know when meetings are being held so it can make decisions on whether or not to scrutinise such meetings.

Action 6: Secretariat to contact the leaders of each of the work streams In DECC / RWM and compile a meetings schedule.

Action 7: The secretariat is to send the meetings tracker to all members every month.

Safety Case as led by Paul Davies (PD)

30. PD reported his concern that RWM proposed to use the 2010 generic Disposal Systems Safety Case as a basis for National Geological Screening and that gDSSC is primarily based on one rock type. He believed that there should be a clear link between the safety case and the National Geological Screening Guidance. He felt it was important to have a generic safety case

for each rock type with the potential to host a GDF and as such RWM should produce 3 generic safety cases.

Welsh Sub group as led by Lynda Warren (LW)

31. LW reported that the Welsh sub group revisited the Wylfa and were impressed with the work being done at the site in relation to the storage of HAW. Access was given to the HAW store and the Sub group were satisfied that the licensee was managing its radioactive wastes satisfactorily. LW noted that a thank you letter had been sent to the Director of the Site.
32. Draft notes on the visit have been produced and sent to the Wylfa Site Director for factual accuracy and would be made available to members as soon as possible.

Updates on Transition of RWMD into a wholly owned subsidiary of NDA led by Stephen Newson (SN)

33. SN reported that he had reviewed a number of documents that had been submitted by RWM and its predecessor RWMD. He was expecting further documentation on the transition of RWMD to RWM a wholly subsidiary of the NDA. The process is in its second stage and RWM are reviewing the attributes of an effective GDF delivery organisation.

Update on Scottish Policy Led by John Rennilson (JR)

34. JR reported that not much was happening in relation to Scotland. He noted that Scottish Strategy document had not been published. The Committee noted the situation.

Updated on the Storage of HAW led by Janet Wilson (JW)

35. JW reported that the main activity of the Storage Sub-group had focussed on site visits. The Sub-group in conjunction with the Welsh Sub group had visited Wylfa and the Sub group was planning a visit to Berkeley to see new approach to the storage of HAW. JW noted that the Sub group's contribution to the Committee's Annual Report would reflect the observations made on the various site visits.

Action 8: The secretariat to arrange for the Sub group to visit to Sellafield in September 2015

Updates on Spent Fuel & Nuclear Materials led by Gregg Butler (GB)

36. GB reported that he had arranged a meeting for the group with NDA on 20th March to discuss the Magnox Operating Programme including reprocessing

throughputs and management of the Magnox fuels at Wylfa. The Group would also examine NDA's plans for wet storage of AGR spent fuel and interactions with the THORP reprocessing programme. It was likely that the disposition of plutonium and uranium would be examined in 2015-16.

Agenda Item 5: Implementing Geological Disposal- Future Activities

37. It was agreed that the main activities in this part of the agenda had been covered in the reports from the Sub groups.

Agenda Item 6: Review of and agreement to the proposed work programme for 2015-18

38. The Chair proposed that the Committee should review the draft 2015-18 work programme. Members agreed that it should be sent to the key stakeholders for comment prior to finalising the plan. The Chair noted that Committee's proposed work programme would be agreed at the March meeting prior to formal submission to Ministers.

AOB

39. It was agreed that Professors Lunn and Harley would represent the Committee at the upcoming bi-lateral meeting on geological disposal in Germany

40. It was agreed that the Chair and Professor Clark would attend the ABG meeting in Berlin.

Question and Answer Session

41. Members of the public who had observed the plenary meeting were asked if they had any questions or points to be raised with the Committee. An observation was made that the Committee seems to have fallen off the radar. The website is not adequately updated and the newsletter is not as frequent as it used to be. The Committee attributed this to the move of its website, which is now managed by the central government website and it has also experienced some problems with the hand over to the new secretariat.