

MINUTES OF CORWM MEETING, 7-8 JANUARY 2014, LONDON

Secretariat

Present: (CoRWM): Laurence Williams (Chair), Francis Livens, Brian Clark, John Rennilson, Gregg Butler, Rebecca Lunn, Helen Peters, Janet Wilson, Stephen Newson, Simon Harley, Paul Davis, Lynda Warren, Laura Butchins (secretariat), Chanelle Gibson-McGowan (secretariat, 7 January only).

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

1. Francis Livens is involved in the review of a strategy for Plutonium in Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel. The work is for the National Nuclear Laboratories (NNL). He is also leading a doctoral training centre for nuclear fission.
2. Gregg Butler is carrying out some work for NNL on the use of MOX.
3. Janet Wilson is in discussion with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) at their request at potential for MOX in reactors on behalf of her employer, Horizon.

Chair's Update

4. The Chair had recently met with the new CEO of the Office for Nuclear Development in DECC, Hergen Hays, who has overall responsibility for the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) Programme. At the meeting, the Chair provided an overview of the recent work of the Committee, including the advice that had been provided in CoRWM's response to the GDF Siting Process consultation. Hergen Hays provided some of his views and stated that the GDF agenda was very important and that he recognised the large public concern. He also said that DECC would be looking at CoRWM's role in any new process to ensure that Ministers were getting the most value from the Committee. It was likely that CoRWM would see a cut in their budget in the following financial year in line with other DECC programmes and Hergen Hays asked that CoRWM look at how they could do 'more with less' in addition to ensuring CoRWM's profile is raised and well understood by all the key stakeholders.
5. The Chair had met with the Strategy Director at the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) to discuss a number of things including the NDA's Research and Development Board (NDARB). They discussed the comments that CoRWM had made on the NDARB in its 2012-13 annual report, the current role and activities of NDARB and the direction it might take in the future with the recent setting up of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Advisory Board (NIRAB). The NDA had, at DECC's request, originally expanded the remit of the NDARB in response to CoRWM's recommendations in the CoRWM report 2543 which recommended that Government ensures that there is strategic co-ordination of UK R&D for the management of higher activity wastes. DECC had asked the NDA to take on this role in response to this recommendation and had agreed with NDA the terms of reference and membership. However CoRWM thought that this role would be better placed with NIRAB.
6. The Chair had recently been invited to meetings at the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society at which he provided an overview of CoRWM's views on the GDF siting process. The learned societies were interested in CoRWM's views to assist them in the formulation of their own responses to the GDF Siting Consultation.

7. The Chair and Helen Peters had met with officials from CoRWM's Sponsoring Departments in December. At the meeting:
- The CoRWM Chair had provided an overview of CoRWM's response to the GDF Siting Process consultation. DECC said that they would come back to CoRWM in the next few months to explore their advice on certain specific areas once they have analysed the consultation responses.
 - The CoRWM Chair also provided a summary of CoRWM's latest views on the implementation of Scottish Government's Policy. CoRWM had continued to observe both Higher Activity Waste (HAW) Implementation strategy meetings and Scottish Sites meetings. CoRWM's Scottish policy sub-group had recently provided comments on the Governance Arrangements Work package. Generally, CoRWM's view is that Scottish Government was making slow but steady progress in implementing the strategy and CoRWM recognised the difficulties faced and therefore the understandable delays. Scottish Government officials stated that they were happy with the work that CoRWM had been doing and would be looking for some advice and more work next year as they plan to consult on their proposed strategy.
 - The CoRWM Chair had also reported on CoRWM's scrutiny of the NDA's work on Spent Fuel, Nuclear Materials and Higher Activity Waste Storage. Some members had met with the NDA to understand their plans for integrating the different elements of work in this area, the interdependencies between managing Magnox, oxide, and plutonium, and how different scenarios were being considered contingency plans developed. CoRWM supported the NDA's approach to proceed cautiously whilst keeping options open. CoRWM also welcomed the NDA's strategic approach to storage of HAW which made sense given the need for retrieval and packaging alongside the long timescales for delivery of a GDF. CoRWM intended to keep a watching brief over activities as part of their rolling work programme.
 - Scottish Government officials provided an update. The Scottish Government had recently published its White Paper on Independence. The paper stated that the Scottish Government planned to maintain shared services in areas where it made sense to do so and cited CoRWM as an example.
 - Following this, the Welsh Government also provided an update. Various indicators suggest that a review of policy may be necessary including compliance with the Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Directive. The process will include a call for evidence which would include a Ministerial Policy Board to which key stakeholders would be invited to submit evidence to inform any change. Finally, should a change to the policy be required, Welsh Government would issue a Formal Consultation. The CoRWM Chair asked at which point the Welsh Government would wish to obtain CoRWM's advice. Generally the Welsh Government thought that CoRWM's advice throughout any process to change the policy would be very valuable. It was agreed that a meeting would be set up with the Chair and the Welsh Environment Minister to discuss this, and in addition the whole Committee would meet with Welsh Government Officials in February.
 - DECC provided a short overview of the public and sectoral events that they had run during the recent GDF consultation. They thought that the public events in particular had been very useful as attendees with no previous knowledge had provided a fresh view. CoRWM had observed a number of the events and DECC officials asked for CoRWM's views. CoRWM agreed to provide some feedback in due course once the committee had collated its views and this would be welcomed by DECC.
 - Lastly DECC also reported that they had engaged with the learned societies including the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society and other technical and non-technical (British Academy) societies during the consultation period.
8. The Chair informed the Committee that he had made contact with Andy Hall, the new Chief Nuclear Inspector at the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and would be setting up a meeting with him to understand the ONR's position on GDF.

Members Updates

Geological Disposal Steering Group (GDSG)

9. A CoRWM member had observed a meeting of the GDSG on the 19 December 2013. CoRWM welcomed the preparedness of the new Chair (CEO of OND, Hergen Hays) to challenge proposals being put to the group. The Chair agreed that the Terms of Reference for the group should be reviewed in light of the developments in the programme.. Other areas reported were that the Radioactive Waste Management Directorate (RWMD) of the NDA was on track to obtain wholly owned subsidiary status on 1 April 2014. DECC had reported that they wished to publish the responses to the consultation as soon as they had completed their analysis, and would be publishing a summary of the responses within 12 weeks of consultation close in line with Cabinet Office guidance.
10. CoRWM noted and agreed with DECC's approach that a new White Paper should be produced rather than a rewrite of the site selection sections in the 2008 White Paper. The Committee also stated that all the consultation responses should be published as soon as possible. The Committee felt that they should continue to feed in their views throughout the formulation of any new White Paper and this should be done in dialogue with other expert stakeholders. The Committee agreed to recommend that DECC convene a meeting with expert parties whilst any new White Paper was being shaped. The Committee also agreed to request sight of all the consultation responses from DECC as soon as possible.
11. CoRWM members also wished to look at the enhancement of the GB3B (geological) model.

Scottish Government Higher Activity Waste Implementation Board (SGHAWIB)

12. A member had attended the latest meeting of the Project Board which had been held at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh on 21 November 2013. The main points were:
 - The NDA was updating its estimates on Scottish HAW alongside the 2013 Radioactive Waste Inventory (RWI). This should be complete by the second quarter of 2014.
 - Each of the SLCs gave a short presentation of their ongoing programmes. The member commented that these seemed to be in hand and the information was readily available. The member was concerned that there still seemed to be no answer to where waste not suitable for near surface disposal would ultimately be placed. Financial implications seemed to be a key concern for operators.
 - One of the work packages that is being undertaken is to look at the waste arising in Scotland in greater detail. This work being carried out by the SLCs on behalf of the NDA and will consider the possible long-term options for the waste and provide an indication of how much of the waste might be suitable for near surface disposal if such an option was to be pursued.
 - A draft paper had been circulated summarising the current governance arrangements for HAW in Scotland although project board members were concerned that it was difficult to make comments until they knew what might be contained within the White Paper on Scottish independence, due the following week.
13. CoRWM had previously made comments on the proposed work packages, and although these had finally been circulated, they felt that no real feedback had been received and it wasn't clear if their comments were being addressed.
14. A CoRWM member would be observing the next SGHAWIB on 30 January 2014.

Geological Disposal of Radioactive Waste Seminar

15. A member had presented a summary of CoRWM's work at an IBC event on 3 December 2014. Attendance of the event had been low.

CoRWM's Consultation Response – Lessons Learned

16. CoRWM discussed the difficulties in formulating their response to the GDF Siting Process Consultation in the time permitted. Reaching consensus had been difficult on a number of points, and it was agreed that the committee should strive for consensus wherever possible. Drafting in committee allowed this to happen. This would be possible by video conferencing and it was agreed that this option be investigated.

Action 68: Secretariat to investigate UK wide video conferencing facilities suitable for drafting meetings.

17. CoRWM members agreed that during the formulation of CoRWM's consultation response, some areas were identified that needed further discussion including: members' understanding of ALARP and the definition of a Safety Case. It was agreed that particular members would lead on these issues and prepare papers for the following plenary meetings.

Action 69: Members to volunteer to prepare papers/presentation Members to volunteer to prepare papers/presentation to inform discussion on ALARP with respect to long term safety for a GDF.

Observation of DECC's GDF Consultation Deliberative Events

18. A CoRWM member had compiled the notes taken by members of the deliberative events with the public and stakeholders that were held during the consultation period.

19. It had been difficult to scrutinize DECC and ultimately determine if the events had been successful as the objectives of the events had not been shared with CoRWM. CoRWM agreed to ask DECC to provide the objectives. It had not been made clear to all the CoRWM observers that the public workshops were to be held over two consecutive weekends which had made effective scrutiny difficult as members had to change plans to attend both days. However DECC were also being scrutinized by another group of independent experts so would be receiving a large body of feedback in addition to any comments from CoRWM.

20. Some general points were that:

- There had been participation from local councils (from both tiers and from a wide geographical base), NGOs, industry, other stakeholders and the general public; some events had low take-up due to late notification, although there had been no restriction to participation.
- There was a lack of materials at events and some attendees would have liked to obtain a pack of material.
- Overall the main presentations made by DECC officials were considered relevant and well-presented. Some participants had expressed the view that some of the material presented was old. There was generally good interaction between DECC officials and those running the events with the participants, however feedback on the effectiveness of the external facilitators was mixed.
- At the public events, the event programme seemed to be too ambitious which meant it was rushed on day two although the facilitators had been impressive.
- Most of the material presented focused on England and did not provide enough detail to cover the situation in Wales.

- CoRWM thought that the on-going, independent evaluation was very effective as events improved as more were hosted and lessons were learned.

21. Those observing the events had also made notes of discussions referring to CoRWM. There was criticism that CoRWM were no longer visible as they had moved to holding private meetings. Questions were also raised over the selection process for members.

Annual Report Planning

22. Members agreed a skeleton outline of the annual report, timescales for drafting, sharing with stakeholders and signing-off and Chapter leads. The first task would be for Chapter leads to present an outline at the February plenary.

Action 70: Members who are leading on Chapters for annual report to prepare skeleton outline to present at February plenary.

CoRWM's 2014-2017 Work Plan

23. Members discussed the priorities for the next financial year and beyond. The main focus of effort would continue to be providing advice and scrutiny of DECC's GDF Siting Process. Within this the Committee would wish to scrutinize the formulation of any new siting policy and its implementation. This work would also include scrutiny of DECC and the NDA's engagement with others. CoRWM would also produce a clear and consistent understanding of the terminology used for safety cases. They would also look at how Research and Development would be used in the production of the GDF Safety Case.

24. The Committee agreed that the provision of advice to Welsh Ministers as requested would be important in response to the possible forthcoming changes to Welsh policy on radioactive waste.

25. CoRWM thought that they should, within the coming year, provide DECC with some advice on the future delivery body's governance structure as these would be critical to the delivery of a GDF.

26. The Committee agreed that they would need to keep a watching brief on Interim Storage, spent fuel and nuclear materials management.

27. The committee agreed that it would continue to scrutinize Scottish Government's implementation of its strategy for Higher Activity Wastes and provide advice as required by Scottish Ministers.

Action 71: Chair/Secretariat to produce first draft of 2014-17 work plan and circulate prior to February plenary.

The Committee then discussed if fracking prejudiced chances of finding a site for a GDF and the need to check that DECC were joined up with those dealing with fracking in DECC and elsewhere. Have shale gas sites been considered in pre-screening criteria in addition to other hydrocarbon resources? The Committee agreed to ask DECC whether they have considered this.

Future Meetings

28. The Committee agreed that in light of feedback, it would revert to having open meetings whenever possible. In addition, CoRWM agreed that they would hold shorter meetings when they met in the vicinity of a nuclear site so that members of the public could interact with members and be given the chance to ask questions.

29. CoRWM agreed that they would invite RWMD to meet the committee to find out how information feeds into safety case and regulatory schedule. A separate meeting would be organised for some CoRWM members to discuss RWMD's engagement plans.

Website

30. It was agreed that all of CoRWM's historical documents should be made available to the public. The new website had meant this was no longer possible. The secretariat had started to investigate ways in which this could be achieved as per previous action 64. Members remarked that it was difficult to build trust and confidence if documents cannot be accessed.

31. Members' pages would be created on the website.

Action 72: All members to send a photo of themselves with a resolution of at least 2MB to the secretariat and update biographies for member's pages to be created on website.

MEETING CLOSE

Action no.	Action	Progress
2-3 July 2013 (Minutes: CoRWM Doc 3121) outstanding actions only		
07/2013/047	Members to ensure that all external meetings, deliverables, work under tasks and items tabled for plenaries were included in the In Year 2013-14 Work Plan and to send any updates to the secretariat.	On going
07/2013/048	Members to submit all future claims with fees allocated under three categories: 1) work and travel for plenaries, 2) work on task groups and 3) other engagement by the 5 th of the following month.	On going
September 2013 (Minutes: CoRWM Doc 3135) outstanding actions only		
09/2013/49	Secretariat to arrange meeting with Regulators.	On going
8 November 2013 (Minutes CoRWM doc. 3139) outstanding actions only		
11/2013/64	Secretariat to investigate another way to provide the historical information without undue pressure on secretariat resource.	Ongoing
11/2013/65	Members and secretariat to look into who else had issues with the gov.uk domain and see if the case could be made with others as a stronger voice.	Ongoing
7-8 January 2014 (Minutes CoRWM doc. 31XX)		
01/2014/68	Secretariat to investigate UK wide video conferencing facilities	

	suitable for drafting meetings.	
01/2014/69	Members to volunteer to prepare papers/presentation to inform discussion on ALARP with respect to long term safety for a GDF.	
01/2014/70	Members who are leading on Chapters for annual report to prepare skeleton outline to present at February plenary.	
01/2014/71	Chair/Secretariat to produce first draft of 2014-17 work plan and circulate prior to February plenary.	
01/2014/72	All members to send a photo of themselves with a resolution of at least 2MB to the secretariat and update biographies for member's pages to be created on website.	