I am a Chartered Mining Engineer, formerly HM District Inspector of Mines and Quarries with the Health and Safety Executive. I respond as an individual.

In an earlier response to these proposals addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment dated 9 February I wrote

It seems that Tony Blair's solutions for nuclear waste are disappearing. An Environment Agency Science Report SC060054/SR1 refers to "significant uncertainties' and a need for further research, and this month's consultation on plutonium concedes that there are unsolved problems putting plutonium underground. The magnitude of the hitherto poorly explained difficulties is quite shocking.

My review of 23 papers in Geological Repository Systems for the Safe Disposal of Spent Fuel Nuclear Waste concluded that there is no consensus that we have technical solutions for the management and safe containment of nuclear waste. These uncertainties undermine the government's justification of new build. I enclose a copy of my review as published in Materials World the journal of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining and a copy of my letter to your Cabinet colleague Chris Huhne.

The events at Fukushima have a similar effect in undermining the government's policies where we wait to hear the effects of the loss of control of four reactors including one using MOX fuel. We also await the interim report by HM Chief Inspector of Nuclear Installations, Dr Michael Weightman, on the events in Japan. I am of the opinion that a wider, public inquiry, independent of the industry and of government, will be necessary. I conclude that this consultation and all others on the future of the nuclear industry, its subsidies and its waste should be suspended.

Christopher Gifford