

# Response form

Please use this form to respond to this call for evidence on Managing Radioactive Waste Safely: Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility.

The closing date for the submission of responses is **10 June 2013**.

Responses can be returned by email (preferable) or post.

Email address: [radioactivewaste@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:radioactivewaste@decc.gsi.gov.uk)

Or by post to: The Managing Radioactive Waste Safely team  
Department of Energy and Climate Change  
Room M07  
55 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2EY

Name	REDACTED
Organisation / Company	
Organisation Size (no. of employees)	
Organisation Type	
Job Title	
Department	
Address	REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED
Email	REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED
Telephone	REDACTED REDACTED
Fax	

Would you like to be kept informed of developments with the MRWS programme?	Yes
Would you like your response to be kept confidential? If yes please give a reason	No

The Government is interested in your views on the geological disposal facility site selection process outlined in the 2008 Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) White Paper. To assist us you may wish to consider the following issues in your response:

- What aspects of the site selection process in the MRWS White Paper do you think could be improved and how?
- What do you think could be done to attract communities into the MRWS site selection process?
- What information do you think would help communities engage with the MRWS site selection process?

The MRWS process is back to front and therefore not credible. The first step must be to establish whether the geology is suitable before wasting money on the voluntarism process. The geology in Cumbria is probably one of the most unsuitable in the country in the opinion of many leading geologists, whereas other parts of the country are very similar to other international sites. The other countries mentioned did the geological work first before asking for volunteers.

The result in Cumbria came about because the local population lost trust in what was seen as a flawed process. Although the two Borough Councils voted yes, that process was also flawed as it was only the “cabinets” that voted – both labour dominated – and not the whole council. The more representative vote was from the Cumbria Association of Local Councils where an overwhelming majority rejected the proposals. The perceived undemocratic process was exacerbated as the definition of who could object at later stages was very unclear but seemed to be a very small area, and there were no guarantees that the process could be stopped with a no vote.

Any community will only be attracted if the pertinent facts regarding feasibility (especially geology), security, methods of operation, and the opportunity for the voice of the people to be heard and acted on democratically are clearly detailed, and are presented upfront before asking for volunteers.

It is highly unlikely that any community would welcome such a facility. Copeland and Allerdale are naturally biased in favour given the reliance on Sellafield for employment. However, a nuclear repository will not provide a significant number of jobs, and there will be a huge requirement for the current skilled workforce for the foreseeable future just to manage the current waste situation.

**The fact that no other council has volunteered should make it apparent that it is necessary to a) find a site that unquestionably has the right geology, b) determine exactly how the site will be constructed, c) agree exactly how it will be operated in the future – in the Cumbria example it is still not known whether the waste would be buried and sealed, or whether access to the waste would remain, and d) have a clearly defined democratic process that is inclusive of all affected people, with guaranteed rights of withdrawal at all stages.**

**In summary, the MRWS process in Cumbria was always doomed to fail as rational people who took the time to understand what was going on all came to the same conclusion – the cart was very definitely in front of the horse, and therefore without the necessary facts the process was fatuous.**