



**COMMITTEE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT (CORWM)  
OPEN MEETING  
18 SEPTEMBER 2018, CARDIFF**

- Venue:** Clayton Hotel, Cardiff, CF10 1GD
- Timing:** 11.00 – 15.30
- Chair:** Nigel Thrift (Chair)
- Members:** Gregg Butler, Paul Davis, Campbell Gemmell, Andrew Hall, Stephen Newson, Richard Shaw, Stephen Tromans, Andrew Walters, Julia West, Janet Wilson.
- Attending:** CoRWM Secretariat, Dawn Armstrong (BEIS), Andrew Craze (RWM), James Gibbs (Welsh Government), Eirian Macdonald (NRW), Jennifer Angus (NRW), Rob Price (NRW), Hannah Paterson (NDA), Martin James (NDA), Roy Payne (GDFWatch).
- Apologies:** Melissa Denecke, Joanne Hill, Simon Redfern.

## **Summary**

During the Plenary held on 18 September, the Chair gave a brief overview of his recent meetings and visits. Members provided updates on subgroup activities, including the technical support they provided to the Welsh Government in the form of fact sheets and Euratom report for the Scottish Government. The Committee heard a presentation from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), on the UK Radioactive Waste Inventory (UKRWI), and Natural Resource Wales (NRW) on their Organisational structure and work on radioactively contaminated land.

## Agenda Item 1: Chair's Updates

1. Nigel Thrift introduced himself as the new Chair of CoRWM. He was appointed on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. The Chair stated it was an honour to be part of the Committee and thanked the Deputy Chairs (Campbell Gemmell and Julia West) for inducting him.
2. The Chair updated the Public on the meetings and visits he has had to date. These included:
  - Meeting with Officials from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS);
  - Meeting with Chair of Radioactive Waste Management (RWM);
  - RWM Executives meeting;
  - Visits to Sellafield and the Low-Level Waste Repository (LLWR) at Drigg;
  - Meeting with Korean delegates from the Korean Radioactive Waste Agency (KORAD) and MoneyToday (Korean newspaper) with Deputy Chairs.
3. The Chair will attend the BEIS Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Forum on 19 September and visit Hinkley Point C and Sizewell B on 2 and 5 October respectively.
4. The Chair discussed the future direction of the Committee. The Committee want to explore increasing its public engagement, including increasing the accessibility of the Open Plenary to the Public.
5. The Committee is also planning improvements to the website. A National Archive portal with a searchable spreadsheet for easy access to the Committee's documentation will be added to the website. A webpage containing Fact Sheets will be added. The fact sheets will outline the Committee's current stance on issues commonly raised by the Public. It is also important for the Committee to highlight areas of work outside of geological disposal, such as its recent response to the Scottish Radioactive Contaminated Land (RCL) Consultation, and advice provided to the NDA on their Waste Strategy Consultation.
6. The Chair explained that the Committee plans to bolster its membership expertise in community consultation, waste inventory and strategy.
7. CoRWM's 2017-2018 (14<sup>th</sup>) Annual Report was published on the Committee's website on 14 September 2018.

8. The Committee was recently subject to a triannual Tailored Review. The outcome was broadly positive and there were five recommendations. The Committee is considering the recommendations.

## **Agenda Item 2: Declaration of interests**

9. CoRWM's register of interests can be found online.<sup>1</sup>
10. Andrew Hall has been appointed to an external advisory panel for the Japanese nuclear regulators.

## **Agenda Item 3: Approval of minutes and status of actions from June 2018 Open Plenary**

11. The minutes of the June 2018 Open Plenary were approved.
12. The action list from the June 2018 Open Plenary was updated.

## **Agenda Item 4: Subgroup Activities and Plans**

### **Subgroup 1: Working with Communities and Communications**

13. Janet Wilson (Subgroup Chair) informed the Public the Subgroup had no meetings since the June Plenary, but corresponded via email and telephone with BEIS officials.
14. Committee members, including members from Subgroup 1 attended stakeholder workshops on the Working with Communities (WWC) and National Policy Statement (NPS) on geological disposal infrastructure consultations.
15. The Subgroup members discussed their views on the draft WWC policy with BEIS over the summer. The Government is aiming to publish its final policy later in the year.
16. Subgroup 1 members plan to meet with BEIS and RWM in October to clarify the roles CoRWM, RWM and BEIS have after the launch of the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process.

### **Subgroup 2: Safety Case and Geology**

17. Paul Davis (Subgroup Chair) discussed the Committee's visit to Germany including Konrad, a GDF for low heat generating radioactive waste.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-members-interests--3>

18. Paul Davis highlighted the differences between the German and UK disposal concepts for heat generating, higher activity wastes (HAW):
  - All German waste will go into a GDF, while the UK are considering other disposal options for the Low Level Waste (LLW) that cannot be disposed of in existing LLW facilities, and some of the Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) inventory that does not require the engineering and geological isolation afforded by a GDF.
  - German site selection for heat-generating radioactive waste is not a voluntary process, and it focusses on finding a site with the best geology. Subgroup 2's view is that many geologies could provide the conditions for a safe repository, but none could be called 'best'.
19. Subgroup 2 is pleased with the approach British Geological Survey (BGS) and Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) have taken on the National Geological Screening output.
20. The Subgroup has suggested that RWM produce short public facing documents (2 pages) on topics such as the safety of rock types as the generic Disposal System Safety Case (gDSSC) is too detailed.

### **Subgroup 3: Planning and Regulation**

21. Andrew Hall (Subgroup Chair) discussed the draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for geological infrastructure. He noted that in order to operate a GDF, RWM would need a licence from the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).
22. Subgroup 3 believes that scientific and technical evidence suggest a GDF is the only disposal option for some HAW.
23. Stephen Tromans represented CoRWM at the BEIS Select Committee oral evidence session for the NPS on 10 July. The conclusions are outlined in the Select Committee [report](#).
24. The Subgroup advised that BEIS should modify delicensing criteria. Regulators want to be able to delicense the sites post closure, but UK Government policy prevents this because of:
  - The requirement for "no danger" from ionising radiations
  - The requirement for an end date for the facility

### **Subgroup 4: Organisational Development**

25. Stephen Newson (Subgroup Chair) stated that the Subgroup maintain a watching brief on RWM's readiness.
26. The Subgroup met with RWM officials on 21 June to discuss the Letters of Compliance (LoC) process and the report "Developing Confidence in the Approach of Disposability Assessments to a Range of Geological Environments" RWM provided to CoRWM.
27. Following the meeting, the Subgroup closed out the recommendation in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Report that "RWM should ensure that the LoC process is applicable to GDFs in all 3 rock types".

#### **Subgroup 5: Scottish Government Activities**

28. Campbell Gemmell (Subgroup Chair) attended a workshop on 10 August on the Scottish Government Radioactively Contaminated Land Consultation. The workshop discussed compliance with the Higher Activity Sealed Sources (HASS) regulations and the Basic Safety Standards (BSS) Directive.
29. Campbell sent a formal response to the Consultation on behalf of the Committee and will share the responses once they are published.
30. The Scottish Government (SG) Cabinet Secretary for Environment (ECCLR) wrote to the Committee requesting a supplementary report to CoRWM Report no. [3381](#) "Radioactive waste: implications of UK withdrawal from Euratom and the EU".
31. Subgroup 5, supported by Subgroup 8, produced a report which will be sent to the SG Cabinet Secretary by the end of September. The report, aligning with the earlier UK Report (see para 37), indicated few short term "show-stoppers" but highlighted longer term concerns regarding access to expert input, resourcing, capability, and suitable oversight tailored to Scotland.

#### **Subgroup 6: Welsh Government Activities**

32. The Welsh Government requested Subgroup 6 provide advice on technical questions raised during the Welsh WWC policy consultation. In response, the subgroup is creating fact sheets which provide CoRWM's position on common questions arising in relation to geological disposal.
33. Four fact sheets were approved at the September Closed Plenary. The Committee will produce a fifth fact sheet outlining the advantages and disadvantages of waste retrievability from a disposal facility.

**Subgroup 7: Storage of Radioactive Waste, Spent Nuclear Fuel and Nuclear Materials**

34. The NDA are consulting on a [radioactive waste management strategy](#) which builds on a successful proportionate risk-based approach employed by the LLW programme. Subgroup 7 fully support a risk-based approach but commented that the NDA need to provide information on how and when it will be done.
35. The NDA are exploring near surface disposal (NSD) as a reasonable alternative for some of the HAW inventory in the context required under the 2014 Implementing Geological Disposal White Paper.
36. Subgroup 7 will produce a report by March 2019 to replace CoRWM's 2009 report "Interim Storage of Higher Activity Wastes and the Management of Spent Fuels, Plutonium and Uranium" (CoRWM doc. 2500).

**Subgroup 8: Euratom Exit Implications for Radioactive Waste Management**

37. Subgroup 8 produced a report outlining the gaps in regulations once the UK leaves Euratom (CoRWM document [3381](#)).
38. The BEIS Euratom team asked for advice on Euratom regulation 1493: shipment of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel between member states. The Subgroup advised that this needs to be addressed by Government once the UK has left the EU.
39. Subgroup 8 helped Subgroup 5 produce a Euratom report for the Scottish Government (see paragraph 31-32).
40. Stephen Tromans discussed the teleconference with the BEIS Euratom team at the September Closed Plenary. This included updates on work surrounding radioactive waste, for both deal and no deal scenarios.

**Agenda Item 5: Invited Speakers**

41. At the 18 September Open Plenary, NDA presented on the UKRWI and NRW discussed NRW's organisational structure, and the GRR 2018.

**Agenda Item 6: NDA Waste Inventory**

42. The NDA presentation (CoRWM doc. 3488) can be found on the CoRWM website.
43. The NDA discussed the composition, activities, volumes, and out of scope materials in the 2016 UKRWI.
44. The NDA provided an update on the progress for reviewing the 2019 inventory, including contractual arrangements.
45. The NDA discussed the July 2018 NDAs [Radioactive Waste Management Consultation](#).

### **Agenda Item 7: NRW organisational Structure and GRR 2018**

46. The NRW presentation (CoRWM doc. 3489) can be found on CoRWM's website.
47. NRW presented on their organisational structure, key responsibilities including their advisory role to the Welsh Government, and how they liaise with the Environment Agency (EA).
48. NRW provided an overview of the updated "Guidance on Requirements for Release from Radioactive Substances Regulation" published in July 2018.
49. NRW discussed their stance on a GDF: NRW do not have a statutory role in the siting process but will provide interested communities with information on how NRW would regulate such a facility.
50. NRW provided an update on future new build in Wales, and how NRW intends to regulate these sites.

### **Agenda Item 8: Questions from the Public**

51. Roy Payne (GDFWatch) asked whether the conflict of interest posed by the NDAs role in RWMs governance, considering NDA are the waste producers, highlighted in CoRWM's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Report (paragraphs 2.92 to 2.94), is a continuing concern. CoRWM's view is that the governance of RWM had evolved significantly over the past year, including the establishment of the Geological Disposal Programme Board (GDPB).

52. Andrew Craze (RWM) asked whether the Committee's plans to increase its public profile will be discussed with, and tied into, other organisations for mutual visibility. CoRWM is at the beginning of the process and will inform Andrew Craze in the future.

### **Agenda Item 9: Any Other Business**

53. None raised.

### **Agenda Item 10: Next Meeting**

54. The next Open Plenary meeting will be held on Thursday 8 November 2018, at the Malmaison Hotel, Leith, Edinburgh.
55. Please contact [corwm@beis.gov.uk](mailto:corwm@beis.gov.uk) for details on how to attend CoRWM plenaries or visit our webpage<sup>2</sup> or meetings calendar.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/committee-on-radioactive-waste-management>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/corwm-plenary-meeting-dates-and-locations-2018>



## Appendix A – Abbreviations

BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BGS	British Geological Survey
CoRWM	Committee on Radioactive Waste Management
EA	Environment Agency
GDPB	Geological Disposal Programme Board
gDSSC	Generic Disposal Systems Safety Case
GDF	Geological Disposal Facility
HAW	Higher Activity Wastes
KORAD	Korean Radioactive Waste Agency
ILW	Intermediate Level Waste
LLW	Low Level Waste
LLWR	Low Level Waste Repository
LoC	Letters of Compliance
NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPS	National Policy Statement
NRW	Natural Resource Wales
NSD	Near Surface Disposal
ONR	Office for Nuclear Regulation
RWM	Radioactive Waste Management
UKRWI	United Kingdom Radioactive Waste Inventory
WWC	Working with Communities

## Appendix B – Actions

Actions from the Open Plenary		Status
<b>Action 1:</b>	The Committee will discuss increasing their publicity, and how this ties into other organisations. The Committee will then informal RWM about mutual visibility.	In process