

Journey to Success 2008 – 2021

1. International Consortium awarded Contract to operate LLWR

LLWR's Parent Body Organisation (PBO) has transformed the low level radioactive waste industry since its inception in 2008 – after first resolving an immediate UK capacity crisis at the Repository.

The national low level waste disposal facility had space for fewer than 400 containers, at a time when the nuclear decommissioning programme was generating more than 700 containers per year. The cost of a second Repository was estimated at over £2bn.

The far-sighted solution was to initiate a type of contract new to the nuclear industry and site owner Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

International consortium UK Nuclear Waste Management (UKNWM) won a 17-year contract to act as PBO. Under the contract the PBO owned the shares in LLW Repository Ltd (LLWR), the Site Licence Company (SLC), for the period of the contract.

UKNWM consists of Amentum, a premier global government and private-sector partner supporting delivery of the most complex nuclear and defence missions worldwide, Studsvik UK, who provide recognised expertise in the treatment and management of nuclear waste, and Orano, the world's largest nuclear service provider.

The contract brief was to provide solutions that ensured business continuity and created long-term sustainability whilst continuing to serve the needs of both the NDA and UK-wide radioactive waste producers.



*Pres Rahe, Chairman UKNWM & NDA's CEO
Dr Ian Roxburgh sign the contract*

A capacity shortage was just one of the issues that faced LLWR. A failed Environmental Safety Case (ESC) submission by site operator British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) in 2006 jeopardised future disposals at the site, leaving an urgent requirement to resubmit a fully underpinned ESC by 2011 to secure an Environmental Permit for continued operations.

In addition, major problems existed around decommissioning plutonium contaminated facilities, poor asset conditions and legacy wastes. Regulator and stakeholder relationships were at a low point and embedded practices, behaviours and culture were viewed as a barrier to change.

The PBO faced a monumental challenge. Over the next 12 weeks we will chart LLWR's journey through a series of case studies which will explain how the problems were addressed.

Follow our journey over the next 12 weeks at www.gov.uk/llwr