

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR THE DUNGENESS SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This document provides guidance on the practical interpretation of the Constitution for the SSG at Dungeness. It is not prescriptive but intended for guidance and direction. The Code of Best Practice incorporates the Constitution so it can be read in isolation.

Whilst the Constitution is intended to be a long-lived, guiding principle document that aims to define the minimum standards the NDA require each SSG to achieve, the Code of Best Practice will be developed by SSG members through time, through their own amendments, and insertions of better practices. Any amendments to the Code of Best Practice should compliment the SSG Constitution.

The Code of Best Practice incorporates a series of NDA guidelines, best practices, and recommendations, all intended to assist SSG members in the delivery of their purpose.

The test of success will be the SSG's ability to satisfy the needs of the local community, the operator and the NDA, and the SSG's ability to develop the agenda as decommissioning progresses.

PURPOSE OF THE SSG

The SSG is an independent, community-based body that is funded by the NDA. It operates under the principles of openness and transparency, with the aim of being accessible to its communities. It is primarily site-focussed, but takes account of wider policy issues and developments.

The overarching purpose of the SSG is to be the prime interface between the community, the site operators (British Nuclear Group and British Energy) and the NDA. In this role it exists:

- ◆ To provide an active, two-way channel of communication between the site operator, the NDA and local stakeholders.
- ◆ To give an opportunity for questioning the operator, the NDA and regulators.
- ◆ To allow stakeholders the opportunity to comment on and influence strategies and plans.
- ◆ To represent local views and input timely advice to the NDA.
- ◆ To comment on the performance of NDA and its contractor with regard to achievement of plans, value for money etc.
- ◆ To commission and receive reports about site activities and their impact on for example safety, the environment and health.
- ◆ To review arrangements for such matters as emergency response.
- ◆ To scrutinise and input into the prioritisation of work programmes.
- ◆ To provide views and comments to the NDA on the future of the site.
- ◆ To provide views on the NDA contract with and the performance of the operator.
- ◆ To set up sub-groups to address specific issues relevant to the clean up programme.
- ◆ To set up wider local consultation via public meetings and other mechanisms as required.

N.B. It is important to recognise that none of these arrangements remove accountability for decision making, which will remain with the NDA or the site licensee.

MEMBERS

SSG membership should reflect the representational structure of the local community and its interests, as well as the operational status of the site and needs of the NDA. On that basis the SSG should have provision to include:

- Elected representatives of the local community
- Appointed representatives of relevant organisations such as regulators, local authorities, unions, emergency and health services
- Representatives of the NDA
- Representatives of the site contractor/operator
- Independent advice to support members as appropriate
- Representation from members of the public and local environmental groups

We welcome local environmental groups, and encourage discussion and their contribution to the work of the SSG. There is an open invitation to Non Governmental Organisations to become members of the SSG if they so wish.

Voting rights should be accorded only to democratically elected representatives of the community or community organisations as opposed to other members who represent official bodies. If an SSG member is not able to attend a meeting they should send an alternative representative.

Councils invited to send up to a maximum of three representatives

**Ashford Borough Council
East Sussex County Council
Hastings Borough Council
Rother District Council
Shepway District Council
New Romney Town Council
Lydd Town Council**

Parish Councils are also invited to send a representative

Brenzett Brookland Burmarsh Camber Dymchurch East Guldeford	Hythe Icklesham Iden Ivychurch Newchurch Old Romney	Peasmarsh Playden Rye Foreign St Mary in the Marsh Snargate Udimore
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Types of membership

1. Voting Members should be representatives of the community rather than those representing official bodies. Those who can vote, for example, are representatives of: Parish, Town, Borough or District Councils, Unitary or County Councils, MPs (or Members of the Scottish Parliament or

- Assembly Members), Residents' Associations, Farming Representatives, Community and Environmental Groups.
2. Non-voting Members should be representatives of stakeholder bodies, for example: Emergency Services, Regulators, Food Standards Agency, appropriate Health Bodies, site union representatives etc. They will include representatives of the NDA and the Operator.
 3. Observers are members of the public and the press
- "Local" should be the guiding principle for membership, aiming to promote community discussion and openness. The interpretation of local is recognised as an important issue and needs to be addressed by the Committee. Potential members should not be excluded on an arbitrary basis; applicants should be allowed to make their case for membership which should be taken on merit and reviewed in the spirit of openness set out previously
 - Membership should be kept under review (perhaps by a Membership Sub-Committee) to ensure the correct balance of:
 - numbers
 - new blood/experience
 - mix of representation
 - the changing needs of the site through the life-cycle
 - the need to be forward-looking to upcoming requirements
 - the need to co-opt specialists from time-to-time
 - Members should be appointed for a specified period during which they remain responsible for 2-way communication with their respective constituency, in whatever capacity they are present
 - Organisations should be limited to a maximum of three representatives to ensure even representation.
 - **Expanding Membership:** SSG members are asked to forward ideas for new members to the Communication Team at Dungeness A.

They should write to the Chair via the secretary of the SSG in the first instance. Please address correspondence to the SSG Secretary, Communication Team, Dungeness A, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 9PP.

CHAIR

The Chair should:

- Independent of the site operator, regulators and the NDA, (the Chair should **not** be an appointed representative of organisations attending the SSG such as, unions, emergency services etc.)
- Appointed by voting members, or group appointed by the Dungeness SSG, from the community and be of a calibre and background which inspires local trust and confidence
- Be re-appointed annually. If there is disagreement the matter should be put to a vote, (see below under "Conduct of Business")
- Supported by a similarly appointed Vice Chair, to act in the event of the Chair's absence

- A new Chair should be appointed in time to shadow the existing Chair for a sufficient period to enable them to carry out the duties associated with the role
- The Vice Chair would normally be seen as a successor to the current Chair

The Chair is responsible for:

- Upholding the SSG's constitution in its entirety.
- Ensuring the needs of stakeholders are addressed through the agenda and conduct of the meeting.
- Ensuring a balance of views exists in the SSG's and its sub-committees.
- With the support of the operators, developing the capability of the members through training, site visits and support.
- In conjunction with other nominees, representing the SSG at national level in conjunction with other nominees.
- Management of any specific funding provided by the NDA.
- Upholding the SSG Constitution and its Code of Practice and to ensure that both are reviewed on a regular basis and revised if necessary.

In considering the selection of an independent Chair, the SSG might consider approaching the following

- Appointed officers from Local Authorities
- Academics, magistrates, retired business people etc.
- Members of the local community

SECRETARIAT

The operator will provide a supporting Secretariat (using NDA funds supplied to the operator as part of the site contract)

The Secretariat should be responsible for:

- Maintaining an understanding of local needs and liaising with the Chair to develop the agenda for each meeting.
- Producing and commissioning papers in suitable styles and language for Members.
- Publishing and circulating SSG reports, minutes, etc. as agreed with the Chair.
- Circulating copies of the 'Quarterly NII Site Inspector Reports to the SSG membership.
- Circulating reports from the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee (EPCC)
- Liaising with the chair in the monitoring of the funding for the SSG.

LOCATION

Meetings should be publicised and must be held in locations that are

- Selected to suit local community needs.
- Held in locations that are freely accessible to members of the public and press.

The timing should be convenient to stakeholders so that as far as possible they are not inhibited or prevented from attending.

The SSG should consider moving meetings from venue to venue within the locality, to improve accessibility and impact

FREQUENCY

- The Chair should be mindful of the needs of the community, the operator and the NDA
- The SSG should meet a minimum of twice per year, the group should decide on a frequency that recognises local needs and the programme of work on the site.
- One meeting each year should be deemed an Annual Group Meeting where the chairman is appointed or re-confirmed.
- Pre-determined dates are preferable for accessibility, but flexibility is needed in order to respond to requests and events. Arrangements should be in place to allow the SSG to convene at relatively short notice and outside the programmed meetings in order to respond promptly to specific issues.
- As the need arises, consideration should be given to holding additional or special meetings to deal with particular issues that may fall outside the routine business of the SSG.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The purpose of the SSG is to provide an active, two way channel of communication. Members are asked to actively communicate SSG issues to the organisations they represent.

The agenda for meetings should be set to ensure that all matters contained in the constitution are adequately addressed in the light of local site and community needs. In addition to reviewing past performance, meetings should also look forward to ensure stakeholder needs are considered in forward planning, both at site and NDA level.

Given that the SSG does not have accountability for decision making, voting should be avoided. However any matters such as changes to the Code of Practice that require formal resolution should be put to the vote on the basis of simple majority. In the event of deadlock, the Chairman should have a casting vote.

At an appropriate time (or times) in the meeting, participants should be afforded the opportunity to ask questions relevant to any reports and the business of the meeting.

To augment routine reporting and monitoring mechanisms, the SSG should consider setting up sub-groups (both permanent and temporary) or holding special meetings to explore particular issues in more detail. Sub groups might be requested to concentrate on specific areas or to carry out work on behalf of the main committee. The SSG should also consider holding workshops and discussions with stakeholders to ensure wide understanding and the inclusion of broader opinion on matters of significant interest. It may also be appropriate to co-opt temporary members to bring expert knowledge to help the SSG or its sub-groups to complete work more efficiently.

The SSG will run alongside the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee (EPCC) which is a separately constituted committee whose aim is to co-ordinate the arrangements for emergency planning between those organisations responsible. The EPCC will continue to provide reports to the SSG on matters relating to emergency planning and can provide advice to the SSG.

TIMING

- The Chair should keep the timing of all meetings under consideration to meet the various needs of the members and of observers.
- The Chair should determine the duration of meeting.
- At an appropriate time (or times) in the meeting, members of the public should be afforded the opportunity to ask questions relevant to any reports and the business of the meeting.

CONTENT

- The agenda for meetings should be set to ensure that all matters included in the Constitution and Codes of Practice are dealt with adequately and in the light of local site and community needs.
- The meetings should be about looking forward, just as much as reviewing past performance
- There may be some information that is restricted due to commercial or security sensitivities.

PROCESS

- To augment routine reporting and monitoring mechanisms, the SSG should consider setting up sub-groups (both permanent and temporary) or holding special meetings to explore particular issues in more detail. Sub groups might be requested to concentrate on specific areas or to carry out work on behalf of the main committee. The SSG should also consider holding workshops and discussions with stakeholders to ensure wide understanding and the inclusion of broader opinion on matters of significant interest. It may also be appropriate to co-opt temporary members to bring expert knowledge to help the SSG or its sub-groups to complete work more efficiently.
- The Council should adopt the following Rules of Conduct for all its dealings:
 - Respect each person
 - Share responsibility
 - Challenge only ideas, **not** people
 - Keep an open mind
 - Question and participate
 - Listen constructively
 - Be punctual attending meetings
 - Chair to have right of sanction against Members
 - Declarations of interest/financial interest
- An open session should be held at the end of the formal meeting to enable the media and public to ask questions. Where possible these questions should be pre-notified to ensure the appropriate member of staff is invited to attend and respond. Answers may be deferred if a member of staff with the appropriate knowledge is not in attendance. The length of such a session will be at the Chair's discretion.
- Allowing members, the media or the public to bring recording equipment into any meeting or sub-group of the SSG should be at the discretion of the Chair

STRUCTURE

- The Chair should consider flexible, innovative ways of working.
- Sub-committees or working groups should be used to work on the detail of issues as required.
- Co-opting temporary members as appropriate may help get work completed efficiently

ACCESSIBILITY

- The SSG should consider the use of multiple mechanisms for making information available locally. For example:
 - Local newspapers
 - Press releases
 - Newsletters, including an SSG Newsletter
 - Websites, with comprehensive use of links
 - Local radio
 - Parish and other local magazines
 - Advertising the time and place of next SSG meeting
 - Publishing promptly minutes of meetings and relevant reports
 - E Mails
- The Council should consider developing a wide range of mechanisms for gathering information locally

Publication of Minutes

SSG members are asked to use notice boards at their disposal to display SSG minutes and to forward any further ideas for publicising the minutes to the Communication Team at Dungeness A.

Publication of SSG membership list

SSG members are asked to display a list of SSG members on any notice boards at their disposal to promote awareness of SSG representatives. For a list of SSG members please contact the Communication Team at Dungeness A.

CAPABILITY OF SSG MEMBERS

- There should be a simple, local induction process for new members that includes at minimum:
- An information pack (to include the NDA charter and the SSG Constitution and Code of Practice)
- A site visit
- At least one meeting with the principal members of the SSG at which current and forthcoming issues are explained.
- A review of the SSG Constitution and Code of Best Practice

CODE OF PRACTICE

- To fulfil their responsibility to the local community, members need to be developed in their understanding of all the issues that come before them. A programme should be developed locally to meet members' needs
- All bodies providing information to the SSG are accountable for ensuring that the membership understands their communications, by using suitable language, by introducing suitable experts as appropriate and by helping raise the capability of members. There must be recognition by all parties that members of the SSG may need time and help to understand technical concepts.
- All bodies dealing with the SSG need to appreciate that members are both voluntary and part-time and should keep their demands to an appropriate level

This code of practice is to be sent for consideration of SSG members in advance of 10 November 2005 and to be formally proposed at 10 November 2005 SSG meeting.