

HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at Decommissioning Skills Centre, Cannington
on Friday 27 February 2009

Present

<u>Cllr M Short (Chairman)</u>	-	Fiddington Parish Council
Mr N Cann	-	Station Director, Hinkley Point B
Mr B Hughes	-	Site Director, Hinkley Point A Site

Elected Members

Cllr C Allen	-	Cannington Parish Council
<u>Cllr M Caswell (Vice-Chairman)</u>	-	Stockland Bristol
<u>Mrs J Brown</u>	-	Parents Concerned about Hinkley
<u>Cllr M Brown</u>	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Mr R Corns	-	Natural England
Cllr K Dyer	-	Sedgemoor District Council
<u>Cllr J Edney</u>	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr J Edwards	-	Spaxton Parish Council
<u>Cllr A Fraser</u>	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr J Freeman	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr B Garner	-	North Somerset District Council
Ms S Goss	-	West Hinkley Action Group
Cllr N Hercock	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr M Hogg	-	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Cllr N Jones	-	Sedgemoor District Council
<u>Cllr Dr M Kellaway-Marriott</u>	-	North Somerset District Council
<u>Cllr C Morgan</u>	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Mr J Pinkard	-	East Quantock Parish Meeting
Mr B Slade	-	Stogursey Parish Council
Mr A Debenham	-	Stop Hinkley
Mr C Aubrey	-	Forum 21
Mr C Graham	-	Sedgemoor & West Somerset Green Party
Mr R Western	-	Wembdon Parish Council

Appointed Members

Mr A Beale	-	Civil Nuclear Constabulary
Mrs N Dawson	-	Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit.
Mr P Smith	-	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
Mr I Bretherton	-	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
<u>Mr G Hudd</u>	-	Somerset County Council
Mr I Hunter	-	Somerset County Council
Dr D Warner	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr G Roberts	-	Environment Agency - B Stn Inspector
Mr D Bamsey	-	Sedgemoor District Council

Co-opted member

<u>Miss B Child</u>	-	Co-opted Member
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British Energy

Mr G Bell	-	Public Relations Officer
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Mr B Eyley	-	Site Inspector
Mr P Higginson	-	Technical and Safety Support Manager
Mr M Speed	-	Staff Representative
Mr D Stokes	-	Human Resources Advisor

Magnox South

Mr T Watkins	-	Deputy Site Director
Mr K Ellett	-	Staff Representative
Ms J Hellier	-	Communications Support
Mr T Jones	-	Head of Communications
Mr P Montague	-	EHSQ Manager
Mrs M Poole	-	Communication Support
Mrs S Stewart (Secretariat)	-	Communication Officer

In Attendance

Mr J Darke	-	Magnox South (Observer)
Ms E Bird	-	Somerset County Council (Observer)
Mr B Webber	-	British Energy (Observer)
Mr M J Davis	-	Secretary

Members of the sub group are highlighted above in bold and underlined. Appendix I shows the full sub group list.

OPEN PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION.

- 1 Cllr Short invited questions from members of the public on any matter which might not otherwise be covered during later discussions on agenda items. There were no questions raised by members of the public.

CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Mr S W Conney, Mr S Dunford, Mr A Dyer, Mr D Gutteridge, Mr C Thomson, Cllr A Trollope-Bellew, Cllr T Williams, Mr C Knox, Cllr P Tipney and Mr D Withey.
- 3 It was confirmed that a quorum of elected members was present at the meeting.
- 4 Cllr Short expressed a particular welcome to Mr B Hughes, the recently appointed Site Director for Hinkley Point A.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2008

(a) Accuracy

- 5 The minutes of the meeting of this Group held on 31 October 2008 were approved as a correct record subject to identifying the second paragraph numbered 11 as 11(a).

**(b) Matters Arising (other than matters to be covered in later discussions)
B Station financial contribution to SSG meetings (para 7 refers)**

- 6 Mr Bell reported that discussions involving British Energy on the review of arrangements for SSG meetings had not yet been concluded. He hoped that outstanding issues might be resolved by the time of the next meeting.

STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B

- 7 Mr Cann reported on recent performance and current issues at Hinkley Point B, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Electricité de France (EDF) had completed its acquisition of British Energy early in the New Year. The integration of the two companies was proceeding but focus at Hinkley Point B would remain upon safe and reliable operations.
 - (ii) It was currently more than 820 days since the last accident involving a British Energy employee at Hinkley Point losing time from work. The equivalent period for contract partners on site was 370 days. There had been no reportable events during the past year.
 - (iii) Electricity production at the station since the previous meeting had been more than 1.37 TWh (thousand million units).
 - (iv) During routine inspections a small oil leak had been detected from an oil cooler. The loss of oil was not measurable but prompt action had avoided any further loss. An oil separator was to be installed during the coming months to provide further protection against oil spillage.
 - (v) Traces of cobalt-60 had been measured on a tacki-shade collector located on the site. The measurements were just above the minimum detectable levels of activity. Filtration systems had been checked but no explanation had yet been found; it was possible that the measurements had resulted from cross-contamination during analysis.
 - (vi) The station had carried out satisfactory demonstrations of its arrangements for dealing with emergencies and security threats.
 - (vii) The statutory outage of Reactor 4 had been completed in 77 days and the reactor returned to service on 6 December 2008. Safety performance during the outage had been excellent; some minor events had occurred but there had been no time lost from work due to accidents. A large volume of work had been completed and some 1000 extra contractors' employees had assisted during the outage.
 - (viii) Activities during the Reactor 4 outage had included the inspection of 10% of the fuel channels in the graphite core. The results of these inspections had been consistent with expectations and had confirmed the acceptable condition of the reactor core. Other work undertaken during the outage included the inspection of boiler bifurcations and tail pipes. This work had confirmed that limits imposed on boiler temperatures had effectively restricted the growth of defects in welds. Some repairs had been undertaken and some sections of pipework had been removed for further examination.

- (ix) Work was continuing on possible measures to enhance reactor shutdown systems; existing shutdown systems were effective and robust but these further enhancements would support long-term improvements in the graphite safety case. Proposals were to be submitted to the regulator shortly.
 - (x) The station had continued its sponsorship and support for local activities. Station staff were available to give presentations to local community groups on nuclear power issues.
 - (xi) Efforts were being made, together with A site and local councillors, to increase awareness of road safety issues on roads in the vicinity of the station.
 - (xii) EDF Energy had indicated that Hinkley Point was one of its preferred sites for the construction of new nuclear plant. Information on the process for the nomination and selection of sites would be issued during the coming week.
- 8 In reply to a question from Cllr Jones, Mr Cann said that the arrangements for site selection and planning for new nuclear plants would include provision for public consultation. Information would be circulated shortly.
- 9 In reply to questions from Mrs Brown, Mr Cann explained the method of construction of the graphite reactor core and the nature of the inspections undertaken. He said that the design of the inspection programme took account of inspections already undertaken and the choice of areas for inspection ensured that the results could be regarded as being representative of conditions throughout the reactor core.
- 10 Cllr Garner drew attention to the importance, when considering new plant construction, of having regard not only for energy production but also for the capacity available to meet maximum demand requirements.
- 11 Mr Debenham asked for further information on the effects of weight loss within the graphite from which the reactor core was made. Mr Cann described work done to measure the effects on reactor graphite samples in test reactors and outlined the modelling of the integrity of structures on “shaker tables”. He undertook to arrange for a film of this “shaker table” work to be shown at a future meeting; he would also provide information on shutdown systems which would answer further questions raised by Mr Graham.
- 12 Mr Debenham said that he had heard of a report that during a recent emergency exercise the head teacher of a local primary school had been unaware of the emergency arrangements. Mr Bell said that this comment appeared to have originated from a fictitious question raised by a trainee journalist at a mock press conference held as part of the exercise to test arrangements for dealing with the media.
- 13 Cllr Edney was pleased by the initiative taken in relation to road safety and was glad that no serious difficulties had been encountered with access to the site during recent severe weather.

SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - HINKLEY POINT A

- 14 Mr Hughes reported on activities at Hinkley Point A Site since the previous meeting, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) It was now more than 600 days since the last accident on site involving time lost from work. There was a healthy behavioural safety process on the site. As part of a company-wide initiative a series of safety workshops had been introduced to identify safety issues of importance to individuals.
 - (ii) During October there had been an event in which a 415v cable had been cut in the belief that it had been isolated when it was in fact live. No one had been injured but this significant near miss event had been taken very seriously and appropriate actions introduced before the work was resumed.
 - (iii) Progress with work on site was in line with performance targets.
 - (iv) Good progress was being maintained with the retrieval and processing of contaminated pond skips. At the previous SSG meeting Mr Kury had undertaken to show a video showing the processing of these skips. Mr Hughes showed the video and explained the different stages, which involved them being decontaminated, cut up on site and packaged for despatch to the Energy Solutions Bear Creek facility in the US. At that facility the low-level waste material is smelted for re-use within the nuclear industry.
 - (v) During December the site had hosted a business breakfast to update representatives from local businesses and others on decommissioning progress. Socio-economic support was also given to the Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce and the Bridgwater Challenge Project.
 - (vi) Consignments of solid low level waste had been despatched from site for disposal at the low level waste facility near Drigg in Cumbria and a consignment of low level waste oil had been sent off site for incineration.
 - (vii) Mr Kury had moved to Bradwell to lead a team which was developing a strategic integrated approach to the decommissioning and draining of the Magnox cooling ponds. Mr Kury retained a strategic overview of the Hinkley Point A site but during his time at Bradwell he had handed over full responsibility for the site to Mr Hughes.
 - (viii) Work was continuing on safety case aspects of the use of mini stores as a scalable solution for the storage of radioactive waste materials; "pathfinder" trials were being carried out at Dungeness A. Subject to the necessary approval of the safety case, a business case for the use of these mini stores would be submitted to the NDA.
 - (ix) A workshop to assess options for dealing with solid intermediate level wastes had been held during November. Five members of the SSG had taken part in the workshop. Dissolution of the Magnox fuel element debris had been identified as the best practical environmental option.

- (x) Studies were continuing of options for the management of wet intermediate level wastes. These options included thermal vitrification and drying and compaction. Mr Hughes undertook to update members on progress at the next meeting.
- 15 Cllr Brown emphasised that the best practical environmental option for the management of solid intermediate level waste identified at the workshop had been dissolution in weak acid as there had been concerns expressed in relation to the use of concentrated acid.
- 16 Mrs Brown suggested that there had been an increase in cardiovascular and other illnesses in areas downwind of the site since the station had commenced the processing of cooling pond skips in 2006. Mr Hughes pointed out that this work was carried out in enclosed areas by personnel wearing appropriate protective equipment and any discharges to atmosphere through appropriate filters were well within authorised limits. He could not accept the health effects claimed by Mrs Brown. Mrs Brown suggested that further studies were required and that this work should not be allowed to continue. Cllr Short said that the claims of adverse health effects made by Mrs Brown were not supported by information reported by the PCT (Primary Care Trust).
- 17 Mrs Brown believed that the workshop on the management of solid intermediate level waste had not allowed a free discussion of the options but that the result had been prescribed by the format adopted. She believed that dissolution was not the safest option. Miss Child, who had been present at the workshop, said she was satisfied that the process had provided a fair assessment and that dissolution in weak acid had been supported as the best option.
- 18 Mrs Brown felt that Cllr Short had not been impartial in addressing the concerns she had raised. She proposed a motion of no confidence in Cllr Short as chairman of this Group. There was no seconder for this proposal.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

- 19 It was agreed that this matter had been covered during discussion under the previous agenda item.

REPORT FROM EMERGENCY PLANNING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- 20 Mr Higginson reported on matters considered by the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee (EPCC). He reminded the group of the role and membership of the EPCC. He said that issues discussed at its most recent meeting on 28 January 2009 included:
- (i) The programme of exercises of emergency arrangements, reviewing the satisfactory demonstrations of the A site's emergency arrangements during October, the B station's off-site arrangements during December and the B station's counter terrorism emergency arrangements during January. The EPCC had also reviewed proposals for the exercise of the B station's emergency arrangements which had been satisfactorily demonstrated during February. A demonstration of the A site off-site arrangements is due to take place in February 2010.

- (ii) Thanks was given to the emergency services for their participation and contribution in A and B site exercises. The role of the Emergency Services Liaison Group is of great benefit in communications between the sites and the emergency services.
 - (iii) Public information calendars have been successfully distributed to local residents. The Health Protection Agency leaflets (previously issued by the National Radiological Protection Board) are being updated and the new version will go out with the 2010 calendars.
- 21 Mrs Dawson expressed thanks to those who had participated in the exercise of the off site emergency plan, particularly during the second day which had been designed to address recovery issues. She said that this had provided valuable learning which would be fed back into future plans.
- 22 Mr Higginson said that with regards to the request for SSG members to observe future exercises, B station was looking to see how this could be practicably achieved. There are currently many observers at emergency exercises – from within the company and the regulator – and this has to be effectively managed so that there is no interference with the exercise.
- 23 Mr Hudd referred to the current requirement for each station to have an exercise of its off-site emergency arrangements every three years. He said that with the prospect of new station construction on the site this had serious resource implications for local authorities and emergency services. He asked whether these exercise requirements were being considered by the regulators. Mr Smith said he was not aware of any such discussions at this stage but the requirements were not intended to be inflexible and it would be possible for sensible arrangements to be discussed.

UPDATE FROM SOMERSET NUCLEAR ENERGY GROUP

- 24 Mr Bamsey provided an update on the Somerset Nuclear Energy Group(SNEG). He explained that this was an informal working arrangement between the three principal local authorities and others involved in considering proposals for new station construction. He emphasised the importance of providing an effective voice to ensure that local issues were properly considered and the need for adequate resources to be provided to ensure that the costs did not fall solely on local organisations .

NII REPORTS

- 25 Reports from the NII Site Inspectors for Hinkley Point A and B had been circulated to members. Mr Smith said that most of the issues arising from these reports had been discussed during earlier agenda items; he invited questions from members.
- 26 Mr Debenham and Mr Graham expressed concern over the apparently uncertain future of the Nuclear Safety Advisory Committee NuSAC). Mr Smith undertook

to seek advice on the matter and provide members of the SSG with a summary of the current position. (See Appendix II)

REPORT FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

- 27 A report on the Environment Agency's nuclear regulation at Hinkley Point A and B Sites had been circulated to members. Mr Roberts drew attention to the following:
- (i) Consideration was being given to the company's application for a variation to the discharge authorisation for Hinkley Point A. The proposal was to reduce significantly the limits specified in the authorisation in line with the reduced discharges associated with current operations.
 - (ii) The Agency had reviewed the investigations undertaken by British Energy in response to the identification of traces of cobalt-60 on tacki- shade collectors as reported earlier in the meeting by Mr Cann. The Agency was satisfied that all reasonable steps had been taken. Mr Roberts said that the matter was being kept under review but he did not believe that there was anything abnormal or any cause for concern.
 - (iii) In relation to its consideration of discharge authorisation limits the Agency consulted with PCTs and the Health Protection Agency to ensure that discharges did not present risks to the public. Mr Roberts said that he had consulted with the Health Protection Agency in relation to allegations of adverse health effects; he confirmed the Health Protection Agency view that the allegations were not supported by facts.
- 28 Mrs Brown did not accept the view taken by the Health Protection Agency. She believed that statistics were used selectively to mask the effects which she had observed. There was no support for this view from the meeting.
- 29 In response to a question from Cllr Short, Mr Roberts said that in considering a discharge authorisation for a new power station, the Agency would have regard to the limits imposed for a single installation and also the combined impact of several installations on the same site. He said he understood that discharges from the new plant designs which were likely to be proposed for new station construction were significantly lower than those associated with existing plants. He envisaged therefore that total discharges associated with a new station and existing stations on the same site would be within the relevant constraints although detailed assessments had not yet been carried out.

NDA REPORT

- 30 A briefing note on current NDA issues had been circulated to members. Dr Warner drew particular attention to the following:
- (i) It was anticipated that the NDA would initiate a competitive process to select a parent body organisation for the Magnox sites during 2011/12.

- (ii) The NDA was proceeding with the disposal of surplus land adjacent to its sites at Wylfa, Bradwell and Oldbury.

31 In reply to a question from Mr Debenham, Dr Warner said that the NDA had no surplus land for disposal at Hinkley Point A. In response to a further question from Mr Debenham, Dr Warner said that the NDA had asked Magnox South not to progress a planning application for a low level waste disposal facility on site pending a review of national LLW strategy. He said that construction of the approved ILW store had been deferred as it was not needed currently. Mr Hughes said that if the use of mini stores was approved it would not be necessary to build large ILW storage facilities.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

32 Cllr Short had circulated to members a note on activities with which he had been involved as Chairman of this Group since the previous meeting. He invited questions from members on his report.

33 Cllr Edney drew attention to the comment in the report from Cllr Short on the high level of turnover of senior staff at Hinkley Point A Site in recent years; he felt this was a matter of potential concern. Mr Hughes said there were various factors affecting the turnover of staff. He said that Mr Kury was leading a team which was developing an integrated approach to the decommissioning of cooling ponds and was based at Bradwell whilst the team was focusing initially upon the ponds at that site. Mr Hughes believed that continuity would be provided by either himself or Mr Kury in the future and that Mr Watkins, Deputy Site Director, would also continue to support the SSG. Mr Kury still retains a strategic overview of the Hinkley Point A Site.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No business

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

34 Cllr Short reminded members of the agreement of this Group to hold three meetings a year, two of which would be at the Hinkley Point B Training and Induction Centre and one at Cannington. Mrs Brown proposed that this arrangement should be changed and that all meetings should be held at Cannington. This proposal was not seconded. It was therefore agreed that the next meeting of this Group would be held on Friday 26 June 2009 at Hinkley Point B Training and Induction Centre, commencing at 10am.

MJD

4 March 2009

Appendix I

SSG Sub Group

Mike Short	Chairman – Fiddington
Mike Caswell	Vice Chair – Stockland Bristol
Terry Williams	Kilve Parish
Barbara Child	Co-opted
John Edney	Somerset County Council
Gerald Hudd	Somerset County Council
Jo Brown	PCAH
Mervyn Brown	Otterhampton Parish
Alan Debenham	Stop Hinkley
Dawn Hill	Sedgemoor District Council
Paul Tipney	West Somerset District Council
Anne Fraser	Sedgemoor District Council
Dr Kellaway-Marriott	North Somerset
Chris Morgan	West Somerset District Council

Appendix II

Questions concerning the future of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Nuclear Safety Advisory Committee (NuSAC) were raised at the SSG meeting on 27 February 2009. Mr Smith undertook to seek advice on this matter and to provide members of the SSG with a summary of the current position. His response can be seen below.

NuSAC is one of several advisory committees that advise the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It reached the end of its latest term of office in October 2008. The HSE Board decided to defer any decisions on reconstituting the committee, pending the outcome of various reviews. Following last year's merger of the HSE and the Health and Safety Commission (HSC), the HSE Board decided to review what sort of advisory committees would be best suited to the changed governance arrangements. This included taking account of the recommendations of Dr Tim Stone's review of nuclear regulatory arrangements, which were published in January 2009.

One of Dr Stone's recommendations, accepted by the Government, was to restructure the HSE's Nuclear Directorate through legislation. We are now working on the details of the new structure and the future make up of any advisory body logically needs to follow decisions on these arrangements. Meanwhile, the HSE continues to regulate nuclear sites to the highest standards of safety and to provide expert advice on these matters to Government. In addition to its own experts, the HSE is able to call on many external sources of advice on nuclear safety.

I hope that this assures members of Hinkley Point Site Stakeholder Group that there has been no change to the effectiveness of the arrangements for regulating nuclear sites.