

Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group

THE TWENTIETH HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 1 APRIL 2010 IN THE SEAMILL HYDRO HOTEL, SEAMILL.

Present

Magnox North

Mr Peter Roach
Mr Reuben Phillips
Mrs Shelagh Milligan (Secretariat)
Mrs Kerry McMillan
Mr Tony Bale (Trade Union Representative)
Mr Stephen Price

British Energy

Mr Ian Stewart
Mr Stuart McGhie (Trade Union Representative)

Community Councillors

Mr John Lamb - West Kilbride (Chair)
Mrs Rita Holmes – Fairlie
Mr Peter MacFarlane – Largs
Mr Kenny MacDougall – Ardrossan (Vice Chair)
Mr Ian Frame (Millport)

In Attendance

Mr Derek Rooney, Magnox North
Mr Mark Blair, Magnox North
Mr Kevin Davis, Magnox North
Mr Ed Lavery, Magnox North
Mr Tariq Sharif, Magnox North
Ms Sue Fletcher, British Energy
Mr Andy Taylor, British Energy
Mr Alan MacRae, CNC, British Energy
Mrs Anne Bradley, British Energy
Ms Elizabeth Gray, Scottish Government

NDA

Mr Keith Riding

SEPA

Mr Keith Hammond
Mr Ian Robertson

Councillors

Cllr Robert Barr
Cllr John Reid
Cllr Alex Gallagher
Cllr Elizabeth McLardy
Cllr Elisabeth Marshall

North Ayrshire Council

Mr Hugh McGhee

Community Members

Mr John Robertson
Mr William Laing

National Farmers Union

Mr Willie Jack

Hunterston Estate

Mr Angus Cochran-Patrick
Mr Ralston Ryder

A representative from the local press and several members of the public were also in attendance

Apologies for Absence

Dr Les Davies, Mr Peter Rothwell, Strathclyde Police, Mr Robert Turner, Ms Nina Staebler and Cllr John Reid.

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Chairman John Lamb welcomed everyone to the 20th meeting of the Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group (SSG). Mr Lamb wished for there to be a one minute silence in respect of Frank Craig, a contributory member of the SSG who sadly passed away in January 2010.

2. MINUTES of 10th DECEMBER 2009 APPROVAL

There were no comments raised and the minutes of 10th December 2009 were approved.

Mrs Shelagh Milligan stated that the only outstanding action was on Mr Keith Riding who was to get back to Mrs Rita Holmes with a figure for clean up at Sellafield. Mr Riding confirmed this figure was £65 Billion.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs Milligan explained that two NDA funding rejection letters had been received for Millport Billiards Club and Quarries Seafield School, and one NDA funding acceptance letter received for the Barony Centre in West Kilbride for £11,000.

Additional correspondence was received from North Ayrshire Council for the resignation for Cllr William Gibson from the SSG, while confirming representation from four new Cllr's – Cllr Reid, Cllr Gallagher, Cllr McLardy and Cllr Marshall.

4.A HUNTERSTON B STATION REPORT

Mr Ian Stewart, Station Director, presented the Hunterston B quarterly report, and the following discussions took place:

Cllr Alex Gallagher said he was pleased to hear about the training being done locally and asked if those being trained were locally recruited or from other areas of the company, in addition to the type of training involved and the numbers on the programme. Mr Stewart advised that with regard to the six apprentices locally recruited, a proportion of their training was done elsewhere in the company with the majority of their training, during the four year apprenticeship scheme, being provided at the station with local colleges supporting the academic side. Mr Stewart added that EDF would be looking to increase the number of young people coming into the industry to meet New Build requirements. Hunterston B was hoping to participate in this by attracting local young people to come into the industry and directing them into that pipeline. Although they won't necessarily stay at Hunterston B throughout their careers, there would be big job opportunities for them with respect to the vast investment in Nuclear New Build in England. Graduate intake was more centrally driven and six of these graduates are from the local area. The graduate programme is much more integrated with them spending time in different areas of the company throughout the UK. Two of this year's graduates will be permanent staff at Hunterston B.

Mrs Rita Holmes asked if the recent power cuts in the area, due to the severe weather, had any effect on the running of the plant. Mr Stewart stated that the power cuts had nothing at all to do with the station which had continued to generate and put power into the grid. The cuts were due to failures of the local grid. There was no impact on what or how the station generated. As part of the safety systems on site, emergency generators were available and regularly tested to ensure the plant is kept safe. These were not required during the recent power cuts.

Mrs Holmes asked if there was a body of experts in place who would come together in an emergency and who would have expertise of every part of the plant. Mr Stewart responded that the Nuclear Site Licence requires the station to continuously demonstrate its emergency arrangements to the Regulator. The Station compliment is made up of people having many disciplines and expertise, such that jointly all eventualities can be accommodated and catered for.

Cllr Robert Barr congratulated Mr Stewart and his employees on B station's safety record over the past two years.

Mr Peter MacFarlane asked Mr Stewart to elaborate on the report of the return to service of R3/TG7 after a 74 day overhaul. Mr Stewart advised that the unit had undergone a planned extensive overhaul including the turbine, extensive examination of the boilers and re-examination of all aspects of the boiler e.g. graphite core, plus a number of other relatively routine activities which are done in periodic shutdowns to ensure continued safety.

A representative from the local press asked if, with the General Election coming up and the possibility of a Party in favour of nuclear power, would it be practical to build a Hunterston C, and would it happen. Mr Stewart said in his personal opinion, not the company position, there was room at Hunterston to build a third nuclear power station. There was plenty of water to meet requirements for cooling and the grid connections were in place in order to take the power away. The company New Build in England is looking to start digging in the next couple of years so he would estimate two - three years for this stage in Scotland and hence five – seven years before a new station would be fully operational. Mr Stewart reiterated that this was his personal opinion.

Mr Lamb added that this would of course be subject to the Scottish Executive's decision on nuclear power.

Mrs Holmes noted that recent reports did not contain information on the amount of radiological exposure and man hours in the reactor during recent Outages, requesting that this be included in future reports. Mr Stewart agreed to resume the provision of this information in the future, adding that the station had one of its lowest ever exposures to workers during an Outage and met all their goals with respect to contamination and radiation.

4.B NII REPORT

With the absence of Mr Peter Rothwell, the report was taken as read. Mr Lamb instructed the members to put any questions they had for the NII in writing and submit them through the Secretariat.

4.C SEPA REPORT

Mr Keith Hammond presented the SEPA report and the following discussion took place:

Mrs Holmes questioned the purpose of hydrazine and whether it would have any effect on the environment. Mr Hammond responded that it was a conventional chemical used to inhibit corrosion. It was quite caustic and levels had been set up in the legislation where intervention plans were in place in case it was to spill or go on fire if held above certain levels.

A member of the public asked if the information contained in the RIFE (Radioactivity in Food and the Environment)" report, was collected by SEPA or government agencies or provided by the Site. Mr Hammond responded that it was done under contract to a third party and was

independent of the stations' results. The environmental discharge information was provided by the Station.

5.A HUNTERSTON A SITE REPORT

Mr Peter Roach presented the Hunterston A Site report and the following discussions took place:

Mr Stuart McGhie asked for clarity on the final plans for the weather barrier, stating it was his understanding that it was previously known as the temporary weather barrier. Mr Roach confirmed that the plan is for a formal envelope of aluminium cladding, in line with the Site's ILW Store, to be installed over the current weather barrier between 2018 and 2020.

Cllr Gallagher asked why Hunterston A Site would not be replacing the four apprentices who had graduated, considering the Site would be fully funded for this financial year. Mr Roach explained that, since becoming a decommissioning site, Hunterston A had never recruited apprentices until he arrived at Site. Mr Roach added that he is delighted to now offer them full time employment and, providing funding can be secured, more apprentices may be recruited.

Mrs Holmes asked if it was justified to separate certain radioactive solid waste types with a view to disposing of it as High Volume Very Low Level Waste (HVLLW). Mr Roach stated waste could not be left in one group or category, for example the Low Level Waste Repository near Drigg will not accept Very Low Level Waste (VLLW) as part of their criteria for that area. To not address the issue would be inappropriate. Mrs Elizabeth Gray clarified that the Scottish Government policy for Low Level Waste (LLW), published in March 2007, recognised that large volumes of very lightly contaminated waste would be created through decommissioning. This created a second category of LLW, now known as HVLLW. Mrs Gray explained that Hunterston A Site are entirely in line with the policy and are consistent with what is expected of them by the regulators. Mrs Holmes stated that she understood this, but asked if the separation would be beneficial or detrimental to the local communities. Mrs Gray suspected that a separate discussion at a future meeting involving regulators and Hunterston A Site representatives would be required regarding the LLW policy. Mr Reuben Phillips wished to note that by diverting VLLW away from the Low Level Waste Repository near Drigg, the lifetime of the national repository would be elongated. This therefore benefits the nation in terms of the expense which would be involved in building another facility.

Mr MacDougall highlighted that in the Hunterston A Site Director's report, it states that the Modular Active Effluent Treatment Plant (MAETP) has been successfully commissioned and has performed well during its proving run. However, the SEPA report for Hunterston A Site states that further information is required on liquid effluent waste stream data. Mr Roach explained that the MAETP is working well and has already reduced radioactivity in the pond by 75% due to its cutting edge technology. SEPA want to ensure the plant is fully optimised therefore the Site is required to provide further information to justify this. Mr Roach went on to explain that the plant is currently configured to remove pond water, clean it, and re-circulate it back into the pond. There will be no discharge to sea until authorisation is granted from SEPA. Mr MacDougall asked what happens with the waste. Mr Roach replied that the waste is held up in a filter unit which becomes a piece of solid Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) before being disposed of via appropriate means.

Mrs Holmes asked what SEPA are expecting before granting authorisation for discharging to the sea. Mr Ian Robertson responded that once SEPA are satisfied best practical means has been achieved, authorisation will be granted. Mrs Holmes stated that it would be of great



concern once discharging started. Mr Roach felt that Mrs Holmes should be reassured by the dramatic reduction achieved in pond water activity and the already small discharges made from the Site. Mrs Holmes noted that she was impressed but was still concerned about filters being stored within the ILW Store. Mr Roach explained that the Site's plan, as per the current UK Policy, is to remove the filters and construct an encapsulation plant. The filters will then be put into stainless steel boxes and grouted with concrete before being stored within the ILW Store until such a time that a deep geological disposal facility is available. It is possible that this plan may change in line with the Scottish Government policy.

Mrs Holmes felt that information on what will be stored in the ILW Store had been inconsistent throughout the years. Mr Roach stated that only consistent messages had come from him, and confirmed that contents would consist of Hunterston A material, a mixture of dry, solid grouted material and wet waste grout. Mrs Holmes said that this had made things clearer.

Mr Ian Frame asked if consideration could be given to the colour of the permanent weather barrier. Mr Roach stated that he would give this matter some consideration, however the permanent weather barrier, which is due to be the same aluminium finish as the Site's ILW Store, must be in line with planning approval process.

A member of the public asked how much waste was being dumped on the Hunterston peninsula and how would the Site look long term. Mr Roach stated that waste is not dumped on the Hunterston peninsula, as approximately 2,200 cubic metres of solid waste already exists. This will be retrieved before being safely and securely stored in line with regulations prior to onward burial in the deep geological facility (DGF). Additionally, wet waste will also be retrieved and encapsulated before being stored in the ILW Store prior to being disposed of in the DGF. The care and maintenance phase will be achieved in 2020, with the final end state being a flat green field in 2090.

The member of the public then asked what protection was in place with regards sea erosion. Mr Roach confirmed that Hunterston A Site has safety cases to judge themselves against various weather conditions. These are reviewed formally every 10 years as required by the Nuclear Installations Act. Mr Roach added that there are no requirements to put in any additional barrier measures and that there was nothing at present which indicates any future problems.

Another member of the public stated that, in his opinion, there was a diminishing quantity of technical data within the Site reports. It was asked if it would be possible to submit some technical questions in writing to Hunterston A Site. Mr Roach confirmed that this would not be a problem.

5.B NII REPORT

Dr Les Davies was not in attendance at the meeting, therefore Mr Lamb asked that any questions for his attention be passed on via the Secretariat. In reference to a particular paragraph in the NII report however, Mr Lamb asked if Mr Roach could update the group on the proposed extension of the improvement notice. Mr Roach confirmed that Hunterston A had convinced NII to delay the date of the improvement notice. This allows the Site time to review waste disposal options, so that if the Scottish Government's Higher Level Waste Policy changes, different arrangements may be explored within each waste stream. Mr Roach noted that SEPA have also supported this request.

Mr MacDougall asked if contractors at Hunterston A were working without sufficient Magnox North supervision, as the impression he got from regulatory reports was that the Site was not robust enough. Mr Roach stressed that safety is the number one priority at Hunterston A and that not only is Magnox North supervision in place, it has recently been strengthened.

5.C SEPA REPORT

Mr Ian Robertson presented the SEPA report and the following discussions took place:

Mrs Holmes asked how much pressure SEPA and NII were coming under to deliver answers that the industry or Scottish Government wants. Mr Lamb felt that this was an unfair question to ask as SEPA are totally independent of both the industry and the Scottish Government. Mr Robertson confirmed that SEPA adopt an independent stance.

6. NDA GENERAL UPDATE

Mr Riding presented the NDA general update and the following discussions took place:

Mr MacDougall asked if the initial £2M Chapelcross received was match funded by Scottish Enterprise. Mr Riding explained that the business case looked for £2.6M to assist, which would be match funded by other organisations and European funding. This £2.6M was granted and, despite some issues, the funding is now in place.

Mr MacDougall then asked if the same funding criteria is in place for the Hunterston area. Mr Riding explained that one of issues which must be looked at first and foremost is engaging with various enterprise agencies.

Mrs Holmes asked what Mr Riding meant during his report when he referred to the right approach with regards to socio-economic funding. Mr Riding explained that the right approach involves engaging with a number of groups and partnerships responsible for regeneration. If a number of groups working on regeneration can work together then there is a greater chance of securing funding. Chapelcross for example have set up a subgroup within their SSG called the 'corridor regeneration group' which local MP's are a part of. Mrs Gray added that the NDA are not an enterprise agency and that socio-economics is the responsibility of local authorities, councils, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. It is the elected representatives and officials of the local authorities and enterprise agencies who are responsible for plans within the local area. The NDA is a partner in that, not the leader. Mrs Gray added that the NDA reports to Scottish and UK Government Ministers. The Scottish ministers approve the NDA's annual plan and its strategy with regards to Scotland. This strategy will include issues such as socio-economics and waste management.

Mr Roach stated that one key approach would be to form a collective view within the group. Mr MacDougall stressed that the SSG have a socio-economic subgroup, however Hunterston A Site has formed their own team to deal with this issue. Plenty of information has been supplied to the NDA, local authorities and the enterprise agencies, however there are too many different ideas on how to take this matter forward. Mr Roach agreed that a joined up, single view was required, however the Site are having a socio-economic impact assessment completed, which was the start point at both Dounreay and Chapelcross. An internal group are now carrying this work out, and this information will be shared in due course.

7. PRESENTATION SOLID INTERMEDIATE LEVEL WASTE (ILW) REVIEW

Mr Kevin Davies and Mr Ed Lavery from Hunterston A Site gave a presentation to the group, however in view of the time factor and this project being ongoing, it was agreed that time for

questions and discussions would be made available at future SSG meetings by making this topic a routine agenda item.

Mr Roach wished to note one particular aspect of the presentation and confirmed that the Site had secured funding for £2.9m to carry out a feasibility study for graphite disposal. More information will be shared with the SSG as and when it becomes available. On behalf of the NDA, the Site is currently investigating if this is possible while assessing what the safety and environment case and the engineering concept will look like.

8. PRESENTATION SCOTLAND'S HIGHER ACTIVITY RADIOACTIVE WASTE POLICY

Mrs Gray gave the group a presentation to update them on Scotland's Higher Activity Radioactive Waste Policy, and welcomed any questions thereafter.

Mrs Holmes stated that the policy has changed from above ground retrievable storage to near site storage or disposal, and asked what the better option is for the general public. Mrs Gray explained that in some cases, there are treatment options which will enable there to be less waste and to recover materials. It is about minimising the waste and dealing with it in the most efficient way, and the current LLW policy specifically allows this to happen.

Cllr Gallagher asked if the policy was a safer approach for the community and, if so, how do we know this? Mrs Gray replied that the current approach is purely to store the waste, however nothing will be proposed that does not satisfy the Health, Safety and Environmental regulators.

Mr MacDougall stated that there was no waste from other industries included in the policy document. Mrs Gray confirmed that this was included under the Non Nuclear Industry section.

Mr MacDougall felt that the statement on "near site" was vague. Mrs Gray explained that it had already been suggested that "near to the site" would be clearer wording. Mr MacDougall suggested that "near to the final site" may be even better. Mr MacDougall also felt that "near surface" was basically just a smaller DGF being proposed. Mrs Gray clarified that this was not the same thing at all as deep geological is hundreds of metres down.

Mr MacDougall asked what the benefits of a DGF would be for the local community. He added that it should have been made clearer whether or not the community had a say in where waste would be disposed, along with further information including how far this would be from the Site and how deep into the ground. Mrs Gray explained that this information could not be determined at this stage, but did state that the Policy is not about volunteering. Mrs Gray added that the local authorities had been approached and it was her understanding that North Ayrshire Council would be submitting a response to the consultation, as will other councils, companies and Site Stakeholder Groups.

Mr MacFarlane felt that there was a very short consultation period on the Policy considering the amount of information which was required to be read. Mrs Gray replied that the Policy document was published in January 2010 and has been on its way for almost three years. The SSG should have corresponded this information to its members.

A member of public asked why there was not an option for deep geological storage. Mrs Gray confirmed that this was not the Scottish Government's Policy.

The same member of the public highlighted that Dounreay, Chapelcross and Torness did not have as heavy an industrial area as Hunterston did, and that the Ayrshire coast was being ruined. It was felt that too much was being forced in the area, especially now that there is the possibility of radioactive waste being foisted here too. Mrs Gray stated that nobody is forcing or foisting anything and added that other Sites have their own difficulties in terms of socio-economics.

9. SITE REDUNDANCY IMPACTS

Mr Tony Bale gave an update on Site redundancy impacts and explained that a contract had been awarded to Hall Aitken, one of the UK's leading consultancies in social and economic regeneration, to carry out a feasibility study on the socio economic impacts of the care and maintenance phase at Hunterston A.

At a meeting on Monday 22 March 2010, the project group engaged with various stakeholders including North Ayrshire Council and other enterprising agencies. The Site have not yet received Hall Aitken's report, however once this becomes available it will be shared with the SSG. This report will state facts regarding the impact the closure of the Site will have, and was hoped to be with the SSG before the next SSG meeting.

Mr MacDougall asked what information the Site is looking for that is not already included within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Report. Mr Roach responded that the Site are looking to use best practice, stating that Dounreay and Chapelcross both went down this route and they are now reaping the benefits.

10. UPDATE ON EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Mr Lamb confirmed that the Chair and Deputy Chair, or their nominated representatives, had attended three National Stakeholder Group (NSG) meetings, two Scottish Sites meetings and two Higher Activity Waste workshops held by the Scottish Executive. Additionally, a Health and Safety Executive pre-consultation workshop on bulk quantities licensing was attended, as well as a full CoWRM meeting in Edinburgh, a Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances meeting held in the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) offices in Edinburgh. Finally, a CoWRM meeting in Largs on the Higher Activity Waste consultation was attended by numerous SSG members.

11. AOCB

Cllr Gallagher raised the issue that this meeting had lasted approximately three and a half hours, and that in future, there needs to be some form of control on the amount of time meetings last. Mr Lamb replied that three and a half hours was not a long time considering the SSG only meet four times per year. Mr MacDougall stated that this matter had been raised before from North Ayrshire Cllr's. He added that no one was forced to be in attendance, and that SSG meetings cannot work within a specific timeframe.

12. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The date and venue of the next SSG will be confirmed at a later date.

Mr John Lamb
SSG Chairman