

LLWR PROGRESS REPORT TO WEST CUMBRIA SITE(S) STAKEHOLDER GROUP – APRIL 2011

Dick Raaz, Managing Director, LLW Repository Ltd

Fukushima Incident, Japan

The world has closely watched the devastating scenario unfold in Japan following the earthquake and tsunami and the resultant impact on the Fukushima Nuclear Facility. UK Government, through the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII), initiated a review of Britain's nuclear facilities. Site Licensed Companies (SLC's) have responded to a number of questions regarding the safety integrity of their nuclear plants, specifically plant criticality, cooling and containment systems, ability to withstand seismic events, flooding and the potential for hydrogen or other combustible gases.

Because of the nature of our business and the low nuclear hazard posed by our activities, LLWR has no requirement for plant cooling systems. Equally, LLWR inventory and activities pose a minimal hazard from external events such as flooding and seismic activity. Whilst there is the possibility for hydrogen generation from container storage and grouting operations, the hazard is low and system are in place to ensure containers are appropriately vented and grouting activities can be shut down which will eliminate the potential for hydrogen generation.

LLWR is not reliant on electrical power supply to maintain the site in a safe condition.

Environmental Safety Case

Since the last WCSSG Scrutiny Meeting in October 2010, LLWR have deployed considerable effort in producing the Environmental Safety Case (ESC) for submission to the Environment Agency (EA) in May. Our people have been arduously working this project since day one of contract award (1st April 2008) we can not over state the importance we place on this project. A successful ESC outcome is crucial to continued operations at LLWR and every effort has been made to develop the safety case in line with stringent regulatory requirements and stakeholder aspirations.

The WCSSG LLWR Sub-Committee has been kept apprised of progress on this project, as has this group. I believe we are submitting a robust safety case that demonstrates the facility is safe and fit for purpose for decades to come.

The ESC comprises well in excess of a 1,000 pages of detailed, technical information to support our argument for continued operations at LLWR. Commencing in May, the EA will have the onerous task of reviewing and validating this information before reaching a conclusion and determining whether to renew LLWR's disposal authorisation for low level radioactive waste. We understand this process will take approximately two years and anticipate a response by May 2013.

Site Optimisation and Closure Works Planning Application

Running in parallel with the ESC is work on an overarching planning application that captures all forecasted planning applications from present to 2080 providing visibility and clarity for the operational lifetime of the site. The application includes:

- The permanent retention of Vault 9 for the disposal of waste (currently storage only).
- Permanent higher stacking in Vault 8 (temporary permission to 2013).
- Future Vaults 9a to 14 for the disposal of waste.
- Phased capping of the trenches, existing vaults and future vaults.
- Installation of a cut-off wall and secant pile wall.

We are in discussions with the Waste Planning Authority, Cumbria County Council, about appropriate break points in the phasing of the implementation to allow for changes in policy, technology, forecasts and to provide comfort for stakeholders, giving them the confidence that interventions can be made should it be deemed necessary.

I want to make it clear that submitting one overarching planning application does not relieve LLWR from the substantiation work that will precede each phase of implementation - like mini-planning applications for want of a better description. Nor does it preclude applying lessons learned and striving for continuous improvement. We have spent the past year improving the design of any future vaults and the closure engineering of the Repository, including the final cap over the trenches and vaults. This has been achieved through an optimisation process and the LLWR Sub-Committee has had the opportunity to input into the design development of the Final Cap.

In addition to presenting at the LLWR Sub-Committee, we have begun a round of stakeholder discussions to brief them on the scope of the planning application and its component parts. We have also held a two day public exhibition at Drigg Village Hall to keep local residents up to speed with our plans.

Plutonium Contaminated Material (PCM) Facility Decommissioning

Bulk PCM was returned to Sellafield in July 2007 however, the decontamination and eventual demolition of the facilities that housed the PCM (commonly known as Magazines) remains a work in progress. A contract for the concrete decontamination of Magazines 4, 9 and 10 was awarded to AMEC in June 2010. Work is well underway in Magazines 4 and 10 with work scheduled to be completed by October 2011 and March 2012. Following completion of the concrete decontamination in Magazine 4 work will commence in Magazine 9 (October 2011).

In addition, a competitive tender exercise has been undertaken and a contract is scheduled to be awarded by 31st March 2011 for the removal of the vent extraction duct work for Magazines 4, 9 and 10. This is a major piece of work and is scheduled to commence on site in December 2011.

I must stress that although there is furious activity on the decommissioning of the PCM facilities it will not alter the sky line. Demolition of the facilities will coincide with construction of future vaults and cap installation. This enables the site to optimise construction activities and reduce nuisance impact on the local community.

Site Electrical Supply and Distribution System (11KV Project)

The existing 11KV substations at the LLWR are nearing the end of their operational life (~ 50 years old). A contract was placed with ATG Group from Haydock, St Helens to replace the existing substations. ATG engaged Thomas Armstrong Ltd to construct the concrete bases for four new substations and to install a new earth ring main around the entire site (3km). Works are ongoing with two substations installed and the remaining two to be completed by the end of March 2011.

Stakeholder Engagement

As part of our stakeholder engagement strategy we encourage an 'open house' policy. The past six months has witnessed a significant increase in visitors to the LLWR site. We are eager to host all interested parties who would like to better understand our missions, our operations and our plans for the future. Anyone interested in visiting LLWR should contact Stakeholder Relations Manager, Cath Giel on 019467 22238 or her assistant, Donna Glasson on 019467 22205.