



RATIFIED

Minutes of the special meeting of the Emergency Planning Sub Committee held on Monday 18 January 2010

Present

Mr D Moore	Seascale Parish Council	Chairman
Mr D Humphreys	Cumbria County Council	
Dr I Tait	NII	
Mr C Williams	Sellafield Ltd	
Mr N McPhail	Sellafield Ltd	
Ms S Williams	Sellafield Ltd	
Mrs T Riley	Sellafield Ltd	
Ms N Lawton	Environment Agency	
Mr P Edge	NDA	
Mr P Tyson	Whitehaven & District Trades Council	
Mr W Proud	CNC	
Mr S Rothery	Cumbria Constabulary	
Mrs J Kelly	Sellafield Ltd	Secretary

Observer

Mr B Watkinson	Sellafield Ltd
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Introduction

Mr Moore explained that the special meeting was convened in order to explore the emergency planning implications of new nuclear build following concerns expressed at the last full meeting of the Committee. Mr Moore felt that the views of the Emergency Planning Sub Committee should be included in the consultation for the draft nuclear policy statements, which ends on 22 February 2010.

New nuclear build

Mr Humphreys was asked to comment on the emergency planning implications with respect to new build. He said it is a very complex issue with the consultation on emergency planning being considered at a later stage in the process. The detailed emergency planning zone (DEPZ) for new reactors will be determined by the NII and Dr Tait said that as the proposed reactors would be of a new design, the DEPZ would likely be a conservative one, possibly 1 to 2 km. Mr Humphreys then gave a presentation that included the possible DEPZs for each of the identified sites in the area. Mr Watkinson said there will be public consultation and the developer will provide the emergency planning implications as part of the submission to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC). Mr Moore said that this is an opportunity for a new start with the right features in place at the right time.

Mr Humphreys said that the implications for emergency planning would not be great for new reactors built adjacent to existing sites, but for green field sites there are different issues to be considered. Mr Moore said West Cumbria is a vulnerable area that can easily be isolated from the rest of the county. Ms Lawton said that following assessments of the flood risk for new build, the advice for the Sellafield and Braystones sites is that it is reasonable to assume they could be protected against flood and coastal erosion and the Kirksanton site could potentially be protected against flood and coastal erosion. Environment Agency have flooding maps of the area. Ms Lawton said that the view of the committee should go forward to ensure potential operators consider the issues raised. Mr Moore said that 90% of those that have attended the public meetings were in favour of new build but many have expressed concerns about the infrastructure. Dr Tait said that the NII hoped to be able to give an update on licensing aspects at the WCSSG meeting in July.

Implications of infrastructure fragility

Mr Moore said concerns have been raised that if there was an evacuation from the site at the same time as an emergency that impacted on the roads, the Emergency Plan would be compromised. These concerns were raised following the severe flooding event in November 2009.

Ms Williams explained that Sellafield Ltd effected a phased release of staff on Thursday 19 November 2009 in response to the extreme weather conditions. This was carried out for welfare reasons and was not organised following emergency arrangements.

Dr Tait added that, during a nuclear emergency, the first counter measure would be sheltering within buildings on the site and this may later develop into the evacuation of certain buildings and the relocation of the affected staff to more secure buildings on the site. The chance of a nuclear emergency requiring a site evacuation would be extremely low, and the chance of this happening at a time of severe weather conditions such as flooding would be even less likely. However, in the unlikely event of off-site consequences, Cumbria Constabulary would manage evacuation arrangements. These arrangements take into account local road infrastructure.

Mr Rothery said there needs to be consideration of the “what if” factor and consideration should be given to the wider issues of the impact on local communities and the problem of how emergency vehicles respond.

Mrs Riley said that during the recent flooding, the site had continued to operate safely despite the problems in the area. Mr Williams said that although the release of personnel from the site had been controlled and phased, there were still lessons to be learned. Gold Command had dealt with all strategic issues and although these were difficult, the emergency plan was not compromised. Mr Humphreys commented that the Emergency Plan did not fail, it was not activated.

Mr Moore concluded that, although the Emergency Plan is robust against such issues, the recent flooding did demonstrate the fragility of the local infrastructure. There will

be a multi-agency debrief on the flooding at the end of the month and lessons need to be learned.

Mr Williams said that he is leading the programme to minimise Sellafield traffic issues on the infrastructure in the area. The infrastructure will also be looked at as part of the Energy Coast programme. Mr Watkinson said that developers could not be expected to pay for improvements to the infrastructure but will need to show how it will get people, construction equipment and materials to their sites. Ms Williams said that she believed that the infrastructure element of the Energy Coast was recognised as being of great importance.

Mr Moore said that he and Ms Williams will produce a letter putting forward the views of the Committee in relation to the emergency planning implications of new build, the poor infrastructure and the implications this has on the economic future of the area. The letter will be circulated to members for comment before it is issued.

Action: Mr Moore and Ms Williams to produce a letter explaining the views of the committee.

Communications for the new site emergency siren

Mr McPhail said that all eight masts for the new siren are in place and silent testing has been satisfactorily completed. A two day window will be identified for the live testing which will involve using the current siren sound and two others, to identify how well the sounds carry. All eight masts will be tested together and individually, this is expected to take around two hours. The Committee will be informed of the dates for testing, letters will be sent to local residents, public notices will be placed in the Whitehaven News and broadcast on local radio. In addition, the Sellafield Emergency Information line will play a specially recorded message. Following the testing a decision will be made on which siren sound to adopt for a Site Incident, with the current sound retained for a Sellafield Emergency. The aim is to have the system working by the end of the financial year. When a date has been confirmed for the use of the new system, the above communications will be repeated and a revised Householders leaflet issued. Mr Tyson queried the advice in the leaflet of not to use mobile phones, but Mr Humphreys said the advice was to try not to use mobiles to avoid congestion of the mobile network. Mr McPhail said the first planned use of the new sirens will be 27 May as part of the sites level 1 exercise.

Householders leaflet

Mr Humphreys outlined the proposed changes to the leaflet. There is some difficulty in describing the sounds the sirens will make but the leaflet will explain the new arrangements as simply as possible. A CD of the siren sounds will be sent out with the new leaflet. He said that other changes have been included in the new issue and he would be grateful for any comments.