

## West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group

### Decommissioning Sub Committee

#### Present

Mr Ron Hargreaves	Vice Chairman
Mr Chris Halliwell	Sellafield Ltd
Mr Peter Mann	Sellafield Ltd
Mr Stephen Tandy	Environment Agency
Mr Rob Waters	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
Mr Joe Clark	Sellafield Ltd Union Representative
Mrs Claire Tandy	Meeting Secretary

#### Observer

Mrs Felicity Wilson	Sellafield Ltd
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#### Apologies

Cllr Norman Clarkson	Chairman
Mr Joseph Murdock	Sellafield Ltd Union Representative
Mr Colin Sharpe	West Cumbria Business Cluster

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#### 1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr Hargreaves welcomed all members to the meeting and noted that Cllr Clarkson had had to offer his apologies for the meeting and had arranged for it to be chaired by Mr Hargreaves on this occasion.

Apologies had also been received from the NDA, Mr Murdock and Mr Sharpe. Mr Sharpe is a member of the West Cumbria Business Cluster and had asked to join the Decommissioning Sub Committee following the recent Socioeconomic Sub Committee meeting.

**Action: M2/01 Report to the WCSSG that it was disappointing that the NDA were unable to send a representative to the meeting to discuss the NDA Hazard Baseline agenda item and carry this agenda item on to the next meeting agenda.**

Mr Rob Waters from the NII was also welcomed to the meeting as a new member.

The Chairman said following the first meeting of the Sub Committee he would expect the formal business of the meeting to start coming together. He added that it is an important and

interesting time for the industry especially as there will be a new Parent Body Organisation for Sellafield later in the year.

## **2. Review of Previous Minutes and Outstanding Actions**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed as a true record.

The Chairman noted that in the previous minutes, section 5 paragraph 3, Mr Mann had reported that there would be a review of the Transition Project and the Chairman asked Mr Mann to provide an update to the meeting members. Mr Mann agreed to do this as part of his site report.

The meeting members also raised the point that decommissioning strategy should be discussed from the both the NDA and the Sellafield Site perspective and this should be reflected in future agenda items.

The Chairman reviewed the actions from the previous meeting. Comments are noted on the action table at the end of the document.

## **3. NDA Hazard Baseline**

Unfortunately, due to apologies, this item could not be discussed and therefore, it will be carried over as an agenda item for the February meeting.

## **4. Environment Agency Report**

Mr Tandy asked if his report could be taken at this point of the meeting as he may have to leave early. Mr Tandy advised the meeting that his report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it consisted of two reports; a brief position statement which should be read in conjunction with the June report to the main WCSSG meeting.

Mr Tandy explained the role of the EA to the meeting members and explained the legislative frameworks and authorisations which they ensure compliance with. The EA has a site specific regulatory strategy which includes objectives relating to decommissioning activities which build on the wider EA strategy. The EA require Sellafield Ltd to demonstrate that waste generation activities represent the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) and demonstrate the application of Best Practicable Means (BPM).

Mr Tandy continued to inform the meeting that the one of the main issues which he wanted to raise was the current funding constraints which the Site License Company is operating within. He noted that EA/NII had jointly issued a letter, recently to Sellafield, regarding this matter. The letter raised funding concerns and the impacts that these are having on progress etc. It identifies that the EA/NII are tolerating the Life Time Plan (LTP) 08 but expect LTP 09 plan to represent, as far as practicable, LTP 07. It was noted that LTP 07 represented the best overall programme for hazard reduction and had been 'bought' into by the Regulators. He

went on to say that any departure from LTP 07 scope will need to be robustly justified and be subject to a thorough environmental assessment demonstrating application of BPEO.

Mr Waters from the NII endorsed the comments of Mr Tandy from the NII's perspective. The NII would not want to see decommissioning deferred for too long as assets do degrade and there is the possibility for skills to be lost.

Mr Clark expressed concern that the NII and EA were both government bodies and were expressing concerns about the funding limits which are being imposed by another government organisation i.e. the NDA. Mr Clark expressed support for the concerns which were held by the EA and NII and asked what the NII and EA can do to influence the NDA.

Mr Tandy confirmed to the meeting that the EA and the NII regulated the Site License Company for Sellafield i.e. Sellafield Ltd and not the site owners i.e. NDA. EA regulate Sellafield Ltd primarily through the RSA 1993 Authorisation and the Environmental Permit (Pollution Prevention Control et al) and that these are legal documents which must be complied with. They explained that ultimately, they have powers under the legislation to require the operator to carry out work etc. if they deem their operations and or decommissioning to not represent BPEO/BPM/Best Environmental Outcome etc.

Mr Tandy added that the EA and the NII are meeting with the NDA on a strategic level to influence strategy.

Mr Clark expressed concern that he has also heard anecdotally that some NII enforcements were in the process of being lifted due to funding constraints which he believes degrades the authority of the NII.

Mr Waters commented that there is a lot of dialogue ongoing at the moment in relation to funding as the NDA has a fixed pot of money which has been approved through the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). Talks are ongoing regarding the way forward, however, Mr Waters re-iterated that the NII and EA are unhappy with the current position and high level discussions are ongoing. Mr Waters also added that the NII have the authority to enforce safety and ensure that the license holder maintains plant in a safe state and that there are adequate legislative powers in place to do this.

It was agreed by the meeting members that there was a concern about funding and risk reduction and it was agreed that this would be raised at the next formal WCSSG meeting. Mr Waters noted that a robust debate is currently ongoing and he expected that this would also be raised by the NII at the next formal meeting of the WCSSG.

The discussions continued relating to risk and hazard reduction at Sellafield and it was recognised that Sellafield has adequately managed the Safety and Environment risks over the years. The meeting members also recognised that decommissioning progress could be limited in the short term due to costs but deferral could mean higher costs in the long term.

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It was also noted by the meeting members that it would have been of great benefit to have an NDA representative available to discuss such issues to address or answer some of the queries that the meeting members had raised.

## **5. Sellafield/Windscale Site Report**

Mr Halliwell opened the discussion on the joint Sellafield/Windscale report and noted that the content of the report could be taken as read but would be happy to discuss any particular items in further detail.

Mr Clark noted that the safety performance figures which are presented in the report are good but the figure does not reflect the safety ethos and the safety training which is provided at Sellafield, all of which contribute to the delivery of excellent safety performance. The Staff have developed a questioning attitude and challenge behaviours if they believe they are unsafe.

It was suggested that Safety and how we achieve our good safety performance could be covered at a future meeting as an agenda item.

Mr Mann said that he would be happy to reconfigure the report if required i.e. he would be happy to include some information on how the safety figures are achieved and if there were any specific areas of interest, these could perhaps be reported to the meeting as a separate agenda item and presentation.

The Chairman asked if Mr Mann could provide more information on the item that mentioned the boreholes in Pile 1. Mr Mann confirmed that the boreholes were carried out within the Pile1 building and not within the Pile reactor. He added that we need to understand the area around Pile 1 better and this would assist with the characterisation of the land. The Windscale team are working with the Sellafield Contaminated Land Team and these boreholes are part of a larger programme of borehole work across the site.

Mr Tandy commented that the decommissioning strategy does not appear in the Site report. Mr Halliwell noted that Decommissioning Strategy is within his remit and there is a draft document on decommissioning strategy currently being produced which should be ready by the end of the year. Mr Halliwell noted that the incoming Parent Body Organisation (PBO) for Sellafield Ltd may want to have an input to this document but the strategy could be included as a future agenda item for discussion at the Decommissioning Sub Committee meeting – perhaps the February meeting.

Mr Tandy commented that the site report notes that there are 32 decommissioning projects within the Sellafield Nuclear Decommissioning and Major Projects Department excluding the legacy ponds and silos area. He requested that future reports include an update on progress for these projects and also include the legacy ponds and silos as they are a priority project.

It was also noted by the Chairman that the report does not yet include information on Calder Hall but it would be useful to include this in future reports.

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Mr Waters also asked for clarification on what the Decommissioning Sub Committee is reviewing and what they feel is important to be presented from an NII perspective. The Chairman said that as this is only the second meeting of the Sub Committee, the committee is still in the process of defining its requirements but it would be useful for the NII to present a short report to the meeting covering what the NII feel are the major stumbling blocks and what the NII perceive to be problem areas. The report should reflect the NII's concerns or pleasures. The Chairman added that the Decommissioning Sub Committee is not set up as an expert technical body but, in order to fulfil its objectives and purpose, as defined in its Terms of Reference, wishes to inform itself about how the site is being run. This is seen as a means of ensuring that the community has an overview of decommissioning performance and has an input into decision making at an early stage. An important task for the sub-committee is to be able to discuss specific topics in detail and bring the results of those discussions to the main Committee.

Some discussion followed relating to potential future topics for the Decommissioning Sub Committee meetings. The members expressed interest in learning more about:

- Legacy Ponds and Silos
- Waste Streams
- Contaminated Land

Mrs Tandy explained that when the Windscale Sub Committee was set up, a workshop was held with the meeting members to explore future agenda items. This may be something that the Decommissioning Sub Committee may wish to consider. It was agreed that this suggestion would be discussed with Cllr Clarkson.

Disappointment was expressed at the lack of attendance from the elected representatives and it was suggested that this should be reported to the main WCSSG meeting.

Mr Mann reported to the meeting on the Windscale Transition project and Embedding project. He explained that once the Transition had taken place on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, an Embedding project was established with the aim of ensuring "business as usual" operations. The Project Manager held daily meetings where issues were raised and resolved or taken forward for resolution. There were also other actions resulting from the Transition from regulatory meetings etc. and these actions were also addressed through the Embedding project. A close out review was held 4 months after re-licensing and with a few exceptions; the site was operating "business as usual".

There are still some considerations for future amalgamation. A Project Manager has been appointed to lead this project and is developing a project management plan to look at further integration, identifying areas of change which could benefit the business. Any future changes must be of real business benefit. Windscale now has one central point on the site where potential further integration issues can be received and evaluated.

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The Chairman thanked Mr Mann for his report and noted that; the Transition Project has been a success and congratulated all concerned.

Mr Mann agreed that the Project Team had worked extremely well and were supported from the Union and Regulators.

It was decided that the success of the Transition Project should be reported back to the main WCSSG meeting.

Mr Clark drew the meeting members' attention to the 5<sup>th</sup> bullet point on the Windscale/Sellafield report and noted that it should say that ISO14001 was retained and not obtained.

Mr Tandy asked Mr Mann if the team carrying out the Piles characterisation were working with the Sellafield Ltd Team. Mr Mann confirmed that this was the case. The Piles complex project teams work closely together and a merger of the projects could be considered as a potential area for further integration.

## **Safety**

Mr Clark made a general comment in relation to safety in that you would generally expect to see a rise in the more industrial type safety events and injuries as decommissioning progresses but it is important to take any figures in context and where possible use comparators with external industries and not necessarily the nuclear industry.

Mr Mann agreed that Sellafield Ltd has improved their safety record during this financial year which is good in the climate of transition. It sets a high standard for next year.

Mr Waters noted that the NII had received a very positive response from Sellafield Ltd in relation to an event which had taken place earlier in the year. The event related to contamination during decommissioning activities and Sellafield Ltd are undertaking work to try and address the issue by engineering personal protection in to decommissioning processes so that Personal Protection Equipment is not solely relied on to protect individuals during decommissioning processes.

## **Decommissioning Strategy**

The meeting members noted that there was little to add which had not already been discussed, but they would be interested to see the Sellafield Decommissioning Strategy once it had been prepared and would be interested in this being presented to the next meeting of the Decommissioning Sub Committee.

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## **High Level Decommissioning Projects**

The members re-iterated that they would be interested in hearing more about “high hazard” decommissioning projects and would like to see them added as future agenda items for discussion. It is also important that the committee takes the principal conclusions of these discussions back to the main WCSSG committee.

## **Technical Advancements**

The Chairman noted that he had been extremely interested to attend the SA Robotics Facility which is working with the Windscale Piles Decommissioning Project to develop a tool to remove the remaining fuel and isotopes from Pile 1 and noted that issues such as this could be discussed at future meetings.

Mr Tandy also noted that he had read with interest the point in the Sellafield report on the recent trials which had taken place in America to demonstrate the potential for using Ultra High Pressure Liquid Nitrogen as a means of decontaminating contaminated concrete and steel. Mr Tandy advised that Sellafield Ltd and the NDA have Site and National Research and Development (R&D) plans respectively and that we should be advised how these are linking into supporting the decommissioning effort. If possible it could also be included as a future agenda item for the Decommissioning Sub Committee.

It was recognised that there is a lot ongoing in the industry at the moment in relation to R&D. There is a wealth of international experience that can be tapped into for decommissioning and the Parent Body Organisation (PBO) will also bring experience in decommissioning operations.

Mr Mann added that Sellafield Ltd will be hosting a visit of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD’s) Technical Advisory Group (TAG) in October and it may be useful to ask a representative to speak at the next meeting about the role of TAG and the learning from experience which is shared at the meetings.

## **6. Any Other Business**

Mr Clark raised the issue that Prospect Union is keen to retain jobs where possible on the Sellafield Site. If appropriate, waste treatment and disposal facilities associated with the decommissioning programme should be built on the Sellafield footprint rather than new off site facilities being built or off site facilities being used. By building facilities such as these on site it would limit off site transportation of waste and would have a positive security and socioeconomic impact.

Mr Tandy noted that Low Level Waste Strategies need to take cognisance of a number of elements when considering waste treatment or disposal options, some of these being: proximity principle, socioeconomic benefit, cost, viability and availability.

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It was commented that the NDA have a responsibility under the energy Act to develop a National Low Level Waste Strategy. Sellafield Ltds strategy will align to the national strategy where appropriate.

In another item of Any Other Business, Mr Waters noted that he may not always attend the meeting as the NII Representative as dependant on the agenda topics, there may be a more appropriate representative to attend, however, the NII would produce a brief report for the next meeting covering areas of interest.

### **Distribution**

Meeting Attendees  
Cllr Norman Clarkson  
Mr Joseph Murdock  
Mr Colin Sharpe  
Cllr Alan Clarke  
Cllr Allan Holliday  
Cllr Mike Davidson

**Chairman:**  
Mr Ron Hargreaves

**Secretary:**  
Claire Tandy  
Tel:019467 72213



Action Reference	Action	Action Status/Comments
(M1)01	Claire Tandy to write to Bob Churchill/Ian Roxburgh of the NDA on behalf of the Decommissioning Sub Committee and ask for the name of the NDA representative who will attend future meetings. Also confirm the name of a nominated deputy.	<b>Complete</b> The NDA were written to and responded. Awaiting name of representative.
(M1)02	Claire Tandy to include "Hazard Reduction Index" as an agenda item at the next Decommissioning Sub Committee meeting.	<b>Complete</b> This should be carried over to the next meeting for discussion. See (M2)01
(M1)03	Chris Halliwell to arrange a visit to Sellafield Decommissioning Projects for members of the Decommissioning Sub Committee.	<b>Action Withdrawn</b> A date was previously arranged but cancelled. Alternative arrangements will be made.
(M1)04	Chris Halliwell and Peter Mann to discuss reporting for the Sub Committee prior to the next meeting.	<b>Complete</b>
(M1)05	Claire Tandy to add agenda items to the next meetings agenda as	<b>Complete</b>

	appropriate.	
(M2)01	Report to the WCSSG that it was disappointing that the NDA were unable to send a representative to the meeting to discuss the NDA Hazard Baseline agenda item and carry this agenda item on to the next meeting agenda.	<b>New Action</b>