

NOTE OF A MEETING OF THE ENGAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP 1 December 2004, Ashdown House, London.

Attending

Fred Barker, Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM)
Pete Wilkinson, CoRWM
Mary Allan, CoRWM (by video link)
Richard Griffin, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Team, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
Richard Mrowicki, NDA Team, DTI
Helen Ashley, secondee to the NDA Team, DTI
Chris Hargraves, ISOLUS Project, Ministry of Defence (MoD)
Jeff Kersey, Project Manager of SAFEGROUNDS and SD:SPUR projects, Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA)

Apologies

Apologies were received from Katherine Mondon of the CoRWM Secretariat.

Declarations of Interest

FB reported that he was providing advice under contract to DTI on stakeholder engagement issues, and that he was a member of the ISOLUS Consultation Steering Group. He was attending this meeting as a member of CoRWM.

PW reported that he was also providing advice under contract to DTI on stakeholder engagement issues. He was attending this meeting as a member of CoRWM.

Purpose of Meeting

To provide updates from each organisation so that plans and activities could be taken into account by those present when developing engagement programmes. The meeting also agreed to discuss the potential role of Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs) in community engagement activities; capacity building amongst stakeholder groups; and the scope for more formal coordination of engagement activities at the national level.

Publication of Note of the Meetings

The note of the previous meeting had been published on the CoRWM website, with links to the following websites:

<http://www.safegrounds.com>

<http://www.ciria.org/sdspur>

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/csec/isolus2/isolus-homepage.htm>

<http://www.nda.gov.uk/>

The note of this meeting would be published in a similar way. It was agreed that the scope for making reverse links to the note from the above websites would be explored by each organisation.

NDA Update

The Chief Executive and Chair were strongly committed to stakeholder engagement. Between them they had attended and spoken at various stakeholder events, including the last Main Group meeting of the BNFL National Stakeholder Dialogue, the NDA workshop on SSGs, and two of the recent regional stakeholder workshops.

The 4th round of regional stakeholder workshops had taken place since the last meeting, focusing on the draft 'pre-consultation' NDA Annual Plan. Comments made at the workshops were being reflected in the version of the plan issued for formal consultation.

In discussion, RM highlighted the commitment to ensure timely engagement in the Spring on the NDA's first draft national strategy.

The SSG workshop for representatives of current Local Liaison Committees (LLCs) had taken place on November 25/26. The workshop discussed issues around transition of the LLCs to SSGs. The new arrangements include having an independent Chair, wider membership, and scope to produce advice regarding site activities. The discussion had been very helpful, and should ensure that LLC members understand what is required in the transition to SSGs. This was being followed up by RG/RM visits to LLC meetings to assist with the transition.

In discussion, the point was made that there would be benefits in consistency in local engagement arrangements around civil and military nuclear sites. Where differences remained, it would be important for there to be clear rationales.

RM reported that the NDA would also set up a National Stakeholder Group (NSG), with membership drawn from SSGs and national groups and organisations. It was anticipated that the first meeting would be in June 2005. Helen Ashley had been seconded from The Environment Council to help identify the required arrangements. It was hoped to start discussing potential arrangements with stakeholders in February of next year.

CIRIA Update

Arrangements for the SAFEGROUNDS Conference on March 10th had been finalised. The key themes were on openness and transparency, and stakeholder engagement. A workshop on capacity building would also be held in association with the conference. It was agreed that other organisations should seek to avoid holding stakeholder events on this date.

The SAFEGROUNDS project has strengthened its Project Steering Group (PSG) and defined a more explicit consultation process for engaging the constituencies represented on it (see the website for further details). Updates had been commissioned and received on community involvement and risk issues. A survey of use of SAFEGROUNDS guidance has been commissioned. The next stage of work will be to examine how to encourage implementation of the guidance at a local level.

The SD:SPUR project started in November 2003. There has been recruitment of a Project Team and Project Steering Group (PSG), the development of a project workplan, recruitment of technical consultants, a stakeholder workshop and initial drafting of guidance. It was intended to finalise the guidance in March/April of next year.

ISOLUS Update

It was expected that the Government response to the Consultation on ISOLUS Outline Proposals (CIOP) would be available by the end of the month.

The CIOP 'Learning Report', prepared by MoD's consultation contractors (Centre for the Study of Environmental Change, Lancaster University) was now available on the ISOLUS website.

Possible approaches to a third stage of consultation (on short-listed proposals) were currently under review. One of the factors to be taken into account is the need to consider clashes with CoRWM's programme of public and stakeholder engagement (PSE). It was hoped to be able to report further at the next meeting.

CoRWM Update

The second phase of CoRWM's work had begun. This was primarily about reaching decisions about a short-list of long-term management options. CoRWM had carried out a rough first pass at short-listing at its plenary meeting in November. Its first period of PSE (PSE1) is being undertaken in parallel, and finishes in the third week in January. It includes consultation on CoRWM's preliminary views on the inventory and long-list of options, and discussion of the factors relevant to short-listing.

CoRWM would refine its short-listing in the light of PSE1 outputs, and then undertake a second period of PSE in March-May 2005. PSE2 would include consultation on the proposed short-list, and on plans for CoRWM's third phase of work (detailed assessment of the short-listed options). CoRWM would decide its short-list in June 2005. This would be followed by detailed assessment of the short-listed options.

Methods in PSE1 include:

- a National Stakeholder Forum (Jan 11-12)
- mixed stakeholder round tables and open meetings in the vicinity of a number of nuclear sites
- discussion groups with recruited lay members of the public
- a small number of pilot roundtables with existing social network groups
- web-based consultation
- direct mailings.

CoRWM would soon be reviewing which types of events it would organise in PSE2. The point was made in discussion that there was value in repeating particular types of events, so that good relationships could be built up with stakeholders.

The difficulties of parallel working were discussed. It was recognised that CoRWM had little choice but to pursue this approach because of the constraints of its overall programme timetable. CoRWM was sensitive to the need to avoid prejudicing the outcomes of PSE through parallel working.

Potential Role of SSGs

RM introduced the question of whether SSGs might be able to act as foci for wider community engagement on radwaste management issues around NDA sites.

The point was made that the primary focus of SSG discussion would be on site activities and their local impacts. It would not be desirable to quickly load SSGs with wider work, for example, with detailed involvement in ISOLUS or CoRWM engagement programmes. However, it would be important to use SSGs as local contact points, and, for example, offer opportunity of presentations. Over time, there might be scope for doing more detailed work on a wider range of relevant issues.

It was also anticipated that SSGs would develop their own mechanisms for engagement with local stakeholders and public, for example, through workshops or public meetings.

RM highlighted that it would be necessary to think through such roles as SSGs develop.

National Coordination of Engagement Activities

There is concern amongst stakeholders about the significant number of different engagement activities on radwaste issues, and the problem of stakeholder fatigue.

It was suggested that the initiators of engagement should seek to work towards a 'one-stop shop', and that this might be addressed by the Coordination Group which has been proposed for NDA stakeholder engagement. It was pointed out that this possibility would depend on the views of the other organisations operating in this area. The split between civil and defence issues was particularly relevant in this regard.

It was recognised that it may prove important for the initiators of engagement on radwaste issues – including Government departments, the regulators, CoRWM, industry and CIRIA - to liaise with the NDA's NSG, and take soundings on whether, and if so how, it wished to address particular issues.

In the meantime, it was suggested that a timeline of known activities be constructed. It was agreed to send key dates to PW who would produce an overview for the next meeting.

Capacity Building

JK had circulated a note of a meeting with NGOs that discussed the need for capacity building to be addressed seriously to enable meaningful engagement to take place. PW stated that there has to be a cultural shift on the part of engagement sponsors so that the issue of capacity building can be tackled properly.

RM reported that measures such as induction, training and access to expertise were being addressed in the build up to the first NSG meeting.

CH reported that access to expertise had been identified as a significant issue within the ISOLUS project, and MoD were considering how to respond.

JK reported that representatives on SAFEGROUNDS and SD:SPUR Project Steering Groups were able to claim remuneration if they considered it appropriate. He added that this had not given rise to concerns about creating 'professional stakeholders'.

The importance of participation in the SAFEGROUNDS workshop on capacity building was recognised.

Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the exchange of information and discussion at the meeting had been useful, and that the next meeting should be at 2.00pm, on Wednesday 2 February.