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## NUCLEAR SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Report to July 2008 Meeting from Review Group 2

#### A Paper by Paul Haigh (on behalf of RG2)

### General

1. Much of RG2's efforts in recent months has been deployed in support of Task Force activities but two Group specific visits, to UKAEA Winfrith and Harwell, have been made and are reported here. The purpose of the two visits was common and is summarised as follows.

- To be briefed on the current site situation
- To consider residual hazards on site, particularly the inventory of radioactive wastes and nuclear materials
- To understand decommissioning and waste management plans and activities.
- To establish technology needs and to consider practicality and timescale of proposed solutions
- To review skill requirements/shortages, future plans and prognosis. To determine the extent and security of reliance on 'external' sources.
- To understand the site's relationships with the NDA, HSE (NII and OCNS), and the EA
- To analyse within the overall UK situation

The visits took place after the NII Enforcement Action on the two sites under Licence Condition 35 (on decommissioning arrangements).

The NuSAC team are happy to report on satisfactory visits and discussions at both of the sites. Particular aspects have been fed into the deliberations of RG6, TF1 and TF2.

### **Visit to Winfrith, April 2008**

2. A visit was made in to Winfrith in April 2008 and a visit report (restricted document) has been prepared and circulated to members. The findings are summarised as follows.
3. The reasoning behind the application of the Enforcement Action was explored and RG2 considers that had the 'tripartite working arrangements' (between the licensee, the NDA and regulators) been working correctly there should have been no such requirement. The breakdown of these working arrangements is clearly of concern and the situation needs to be monitored. Relationships with individual regulators and NDA staff are good.
4. Whilst the overall advantages of early decommissioning at Winfrith are obvious, there are few if any safety implications of a delay to the activities. NuSAC can therefore remain neutral in this part of the debate.
5. RG2 questions the fitness for purpose of the present licence conditions for application at a low risk site. This is being taken up by the Regulatory Framework Task Force.
6. Remaining on-site hazards are of a low order and overall do not present a significant off-site risk. Clear plans exist to remove the materials from the site or to "passivate" them for safe, extended storage. There are no novel technology needs to complete decommissioning at Winfrith and such needs as exist are included in the TBRDs.
7. Skills retention and development is a national issue and the Winfrith situation is little different from the national norm.

### **Visit to Harwell, May 2008**

8. A visit was made to Harwell in May 2008 and a visit report (restricted document) is in preparation (and may have been circulated to members before the July Main meeting). The findings are summarised as follows.
9. The failure of the tripartite working arrangements at Harwell is of considerable concern and it is unclear when appropriate arrangements are likely to be established. Relationships with most of the individual regulators, stakeholders and NDA staff are good.
10. Decommissioning at Harwell has been little affected by funding reductions.
11. Remaining on site hazards are well understood and under control. The inventory is continuously refined as packages are examined. Three major waste streams are being processed to plan. The technology needs to complete decommissioning and waste treatment at Harwell are applications of known technology and are included in the TBRDs.

12. Skills retention and development is of concern and the site is considering a new recruitment programme.

### **Future RG2 Plans**

13. Liaison with CoRWM on storage and disposal is anticipated in the short term. An invitation to a planned HSE/NDA workshop is anticipated and will be accepted.

14. NUSAC attendance at the planned workshop on 'asset care and management of ageing plant' will be coordinated by RG2.

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