

Policy Update Briefing for NuSAC Meeting: October 2005**1. Delicensing Policy Statement**

HSE published its policy statement (on the interpretation of "no danger" in the Nuclear Installations Act) on August 15th. HSE's Nuclear Safety Directorate is drafting guidance for its technical assessors on the interpretation of this policy and what to look for in licensees' delicensing submissions. We expect that this draft guidance will be published for comment by the end of this year. NuSAC will be alerted to the document's publication.

2. Low Level Waste Policy

The realisation of the large amount of Low Level Waste (LLW) to be produced as sites enter decommissioning has focused attention on LLW policy. A second workshop sponsored by Defra and the devolved administrations took place in October to consider a wide range of issues to inform discussions of policy [Paul Haigh attended]. There was a general view that so called 'small users' were in danger of being overlooked in developing the policy. The oil industry, hospitals etc. all had particular needs, which, if not met by Drigg, needed to be met in some other way.

HSE Policy and NSD met with the Scottish Executive to discuss proposals for a possible LLW disposal facility at Dounreay. There seems to be general commitment to a facility for Dounreay waste, but a perception that the NDA's proposal to put management of Dounreay (and the proposed facility) out to competitive tender may delay the project. The NDA is considering the issue.

3. Proposed amendments to the Nuclear Reactors (Environmental Impact Assessment for Decommissioning) Regulations (EIADR99)

Consultation on amendments to the regulations began on August 1st. Amendments are required in order to:

- Correct some typographical errors;
- Implement changes made to the EIADR99's parent directive; and
- Improve the clarity and administrative efficiency of the EIADR99 by only stopping the decommissioning project *on the part(s)* of a site where there's a change/extension that results in a Significant Adverse Effect on the Environment (SAEE). At the moment, if there's a change/extension resulting in a SAEE then the *whole* decommissioning project on the site has to stop until there has been a public consultation on the change/extension.

The consultation closes at the end of October and HSE hopes that the amendment regulations will come into force in April 2006.

4. Nuclear Decommissioning Authority**(i) Strategy Consultation**

The NDA published its first draft strategy on August 11th for a 3-month consultation period. Policy Group and NSD are collating comments and will make a submission to the NDA by the deadline of 11th November. HSE's comments will be shared with NuSAC and will be made publicly available.

(ii) Competition Timetable and Procedures

Although we cannot prejudge the outcome of the NDA's consultation on its strategy, HSE has engaged the NDA in preliminary discussions on the regulatory process and procedures that the published draft competition timetable would entail. At the least, the timetable would be very demanding; at worst, it could prove unfeasible for HSE to issue the necessary regulatory permissions to allow the restructuring and relicensing necessary to comply with NDA's proposals.

5. THORP

The spillage in April continues to attract interest internationally and this interest has been fuelled by recent media coverage of Sellafield.

Representatives from Ireland's Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment and Local Government recently visited Sellafield and met with representatives of NSD and the EA.

HSE
Policy Group
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