

Nuclear Safety Advisory Committee – Review

Spring 2007

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

NUCLEAR SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NuSAC) - REVIEW

SPRING 2007

Foreword

I am very pleased to present this review of the work of the Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) Nuclear Safety Advisory Committee, covering the period from the committee's last reconstitution in October 2005, to spring 2007. We aim to publish reviews such as this on an annual basis from now on.

This has been a particularly busy and demanding period for the Committee. In addition to a full work programme, the Committee has successfully come through a lengthy and comprehensive review and reconstitution by the HSC and replaced a number of its members who left under the Government's 10-year limit on service rule (Nolan Principles).

In October 2005, vacancies on the Committee were advertised in the major newspapers and in a number of academic publications. The Health and Safety Executive received over 200 applicants – all of a very high standard.

The Committee has also carried out a detailed review of its ways of working and prepared a future work programme for the period until the next HSC review in October 2008.

More details on all of these topics and a summary of the contribution that the Committee's work has made towards improving safety in the nuclear sector are set out in the following report.

One of the recommendations accepted by HSC in approving NuSAC's reconstitution was that the Committee should make at least one meeting a year open, to which the public would be invited. To this end, I am pleased to announce that the first Open Meeting of NuSAC will take place on Thursday, 5 July 2007 in London. Attendance will be by ticket and the meeting will be advertised.

Finally, I should like to thank all Members and Observers for the hard work and dedication that they put into the activities of the Committee. I would especially wish to record my thanks to those Members who have recently retired for their many years of unstinting effort which ensured that the Committee remained relevant, respected and authoritative through a challenging period of great change.



Dr Stephen Vranich
CHAIRMAN

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Introduction

1 NuSAC is one of a number advisory committees appointed by the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to provide it with advice. The structure of advisory committees broadly reflects the composition of HSC itself (ie they include members representing employer and employee interests), with an emphasis on securing technical advice. They operate under a code of practice that sets out how members should observe the standards of public life. HSC/E reviews the remit and need for these standing committees as the opportunity arises.

About NuSAC

2 NuSAC's current terms of reference are:

"To advise the HSC on:

- matters which are referred to it or which it considers require attention regarding nuclear safety policy and its implementation at nuclear installations; and
- the adequacy and balance of HSC's nuclear safety research programme."

3 NuSAC was last reviewed by HSC and reconstituted in October 2005 for a further period of 3 years. This followed an independent assessment by external consultants, which reviewed the Committee's effectiveness, terms of reference and ways of working.

Current Structure and Membership

4 The Committee consists of an independent chair and up to 20 members, of whom 12 are independent; four are nominated by the Confederation of British Industry and four by the Trades Union Congress. Members have expertise relevant to the safety of the nuclear industry and/or its regulation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and may serve for up to 10 years.

Reconstitution and Changes

5 There has been significant change in membership over the last 12 months following a recruitment competition to replace seven members who

were retiring due to the 10-year limit on service rule (Nolan Principles) and to fill existing vacancies. A list of NuSAC members and their affiliations is at Annex 1.

6 The reconstitution process and membership changes have involved the Committee in much additional work, including:

- Holding an induction event for new NuSAC Members
- Developing a focused, more strategic work plan to cover the period to the next reconstitution review in October 2008.
- Agreeing new terms of reference and ways of working for the Sub-Committee on Research (SCR), which became Review Group 6 from the beginning of April 2007.

7 During the period covered by this report, in addition to the Main Committee and the Sub Committee on Research (SCR), there were five Review Groups (RGs) focusing on specific aspects of nuclear safety. Membership of the RG and the SCR was as shown in Annex 2.

Payment and Expenses

8 All Committee members are unpaid, receiving only HSE-rate travel and subsistence expenses.

Meetings in 2006/07

9 Four meetings of the Main Committee took place over this reporting period: 23 February and 6 July 2006 (London); 3 November 2006 (Portsmouth); and 22 March 2007 (London). The meeting in November followed the Committee's site visit to HMS Sultan, the navy's education and training establishment. The chair and two representatives of the Defence Nuclear Safety Committee also attended the latter, having accepted NuSAC's invitation of a joint visit.

10 The Sub-Committee on Research (now Review Group 6) met in April, October 2006 and February 2007; Review Groups 1-5 met on an ad hoc basis throughout the period.

Key Achievements in 2006/07

11 NuSAC's key achievements during this period have been:

- By publishing an annual commentary on comparative data, encouraging all nuclear licensees to benchmark and improve their health and safety performance.
- Drawing attention to the potential impact on safety performance of an acquisition by a company unfamiliar with UK nuclear legislation by commissioning a "lessons learned" paper by GE Healthcare.

- Encouraging the dissemination of industry best practice in maintaining good health and safety performance through major change.
- Holding several meetings with staff of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and contributing to the development of NDA's Strategy, Annual Plan, Health Safety Security and Environment Report and other key policy documents.
- Encouraged development of a coordinated plan for placing plutonium contaminated material (PCM) into a safe and passive state at all four nuclear sites where there are substantial quantities of this type of waste.
- Making visits to Barnwood (British Energy), Springfields Nuclear Fuels Limited, Sellafield (British Nuclear Group), Abbeywood (Ministry of Defence) and Harwell (UK Atomic Energy Authority).
- Observing emergency exercise "Oscar" at Sellafield and contributing to the assessment of it as the only independent observer.
- Responding to the following consultations:
 - Amendments to the Nuclear Reactors (Environmental Impact Assessment for Decommissioning) Regulations 1999.
 - The Government's Energy Review - NuSAC's views were taken into account in HSE's expert report.
 - The review and revision of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate's (NII's) Safety Assessment Principles. NuSAC was represented at two workshops organised by HSE's Nuclear Safety Directorate as part of this process.
- Taking a close interest in developments relating to the recommendations of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM).

Future Challenges

12 NuSAC has developed a refocused, more strategic work plan to cover the remainder of the period until the next reconstitution review due in October 2008. It has set up task forces to address specific issues:

- Interfaces between organisations
- Regulatory framework
- Safety Culture
- ICRP recommendations.

13 Over the next two years, NuSAC will work in partnership with HSE's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and other key stakeholders on all aspects of nuclear safety. It expects to pay particular attention to organisational changes, and the need for a clear 'controlling mind' and a strong 'safety culture' at all nuclear sites. If the Government decides to go ahead with a new build reactor programme this will be a significant area of work for the Committee, which

will advise the HSC on topics such as the safety features of new reactor designs. NuSAC aims to publish task reports and observations on its dedicated page of HSE's website as tasks are completed.

Forthcoming Meetings

14 The next meeting is scheduled to take place in London on 5 July 2007 and will be the first open meeting of this Committee.

15 For further information -
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/hsc/iacs/nusac/index.htm>

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May 2007

LIST OF NuSAC MEMBERS

Chair (Independent)

Stephen Vbranch - Jacobs Engineering

CBI Nominated Members

Andrew Clarke – formerly Magnox Electric
Roger Coates – formerly BNFL (British Nuclear Group)
Bryan Edmondson – formerly Nuclear Electric
Alan Muir - GlaxoSmithKline

TUC Nominated Members

John Billard – formerly Prospect
Barry Cripwell – Rolls Royce
Pam Duerden – Nexia Solutions Ltd
Malcolm Bonnett - Amicus

Independent Members

Sheila Ashford – formerly Norfolk Branch Magistrates; represents Public Interest
Dick Bird – formerly Atomic Weapons Establishment
Robin Bloomfield – Professor (City University, London)
Paul Haigh – Paul Haigh Partnership
Bill Heafield – formerly BNFL (British Nuclear Group)
Marion Hill – Self-employed Consultant
Peter Manning – formerly BNFL (British Nuclear Group)
Rod McKenzie – Scottish Executive
Neville Moray – Emeritus Professor of Psychology (University of Surrey)
Gordon Munro – formerly Magnox Electric
Anthony Webb – Formerly G.E. Healthcare
Murray Sinclair – Senior Lecturer (Loughborough University)

The following organisations send an Observer to NuSAC meetings:

Industry Observers: Atomic Weapons Establishment; British Energy; British Nuclear Fuels Ltd plc; British Nuclear Group; Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd; GE Healthcare; Magnox Electric plc; Springfields Fuels Ltd; United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority; Urenco (Capenhurst) Ltd.

Government Observers: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Department for Trade and Industry; Environment Agency; Health Protection Agency; Ministry of Defence; Nuclear Decommissioning Authority; Scottish Executive; Scottish Environment Protection Agency; Welsh Assembly Government.

May 2007

ANNEX 2

LIST OF MEMBERS OF NuSAC REVIEW GROUPS

Review Group 1: Safety Management and Performance

Convenor: Andrew Clarke (CBI)

Robin Bloomfield (Ind)
Barry Cripwell (TUC)
Alan Muir (CBI)
Gordon Munro (Ind)
Anthony Webb (Ind)

Review Group 2: Fuel Cycle Operations and Interim Safety

Convenor: Bill Heafield (Ind)

Paul Haigh (Ind)
Marion Hill (Ind)
Peter Manning (Ind)
Neville Moray (Ind)
Gordon Munro (Ind)

Review Group 3: Nuclear Decommissioning

Authority/Decommissioning Policy

Convenor: Anthony Webb (Ind)

John Billard (TUC)
Andrew Clarke (CBI)
Roger Coates (CBI)
Marion Hill (Ind)
Neville Moray (Ind)
Sheila Ashford (Ind)

Review Group 4: Emergency Arrangements

Convenor: Barry Cripwell (TUC)

Sheila Ashford (Ind)
John Billard (TUC)
Rod McKenzie (Ind)

Review Group 5: Ministry of Defence

Convenor: Dick Bird (Ind)

Pam Duerden (TUC)
Bryan Edmondson (CBI) advisory capacity only
Rod McKenzie (Ind)

Sub-Committee on Research

Chair: Neville Moray (Ind) retired March 2007

From April 2007: Review Group 6: Research

Convenor: Peter Manning (Ind)

Paul Haigh (Ind)
Robin Bloomfield (Ind)
Alan Muir (CBI)
Gordon Munro (Ind)

May 2007

