



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 9th February 2011

NFLA opposes decision to transport huge Canadian radioactive waste generator shipments across UK and Irish territorial waters

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA), in co-operation with the marine pollution local authority group KIMO International, are writing to UK, Irish, Norwegian, Swedish and Canadian authorities to outline its deep alarm and concern that 16 highly radioactive waste steam generators could soon be transported by sea from Canada - crossing Irish and UK territorial waters - to be cleaned-up in Sweden.

The NFLA is writing to the UK and Irish Transport and Environment Ministers and to relevant safety regulators asking them to intervene to ban these potentially highly dangerous cargos. Last Friday, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission approved the proposed shipment of 16 bus-sized radioactive steam generators across the Great Lakes on the Canadian / US border to a Studsvik plant on the Swedish coast. The shipments are likely to go through Irish, UK, Norwegian and Swedish territorial waters, and each Government will need to give its permission to do this.

Linking in with the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility (CCNR), the NFLA has also pledged its solidarity with the large number of Canadian Mayors, Municipalities, Parliamentarians and community groups who are campaigning to stop the shipments being transported from Canada in the first place.

Bruce Power applied in April 2010 to transport the 16 steam contaminators to Sweden, where the company Studsvik will decontaminate around 90% of the materials – and sell the decontaminated scrap metal on the open market – and return the generators to Canada, where they will be stored at a facility by the Canadian utility. According to CCNR and other groups, the radioactive levels of the generators exceed the legal limits of the International Atomic Energy Authority Regulations for the safe transport of radioactive materials by **50 times** (1).

NFLA Chair, Bailie George Regan, says:

“I am extremely alarmed by the decision of the Canadian nuclear regulator to permit the transportation of this highly dangerous radioactive material shipment across thousands of miles of open sea to Sweden. The shipment will contain a cocktail of radioactive materials which even at low levels are potentially dangerous to human health. The implication of an accident involving such a shipment does not bear thinking about. It seems to me to be a risky endeavour to transport such shipments such long distances for clean-up, passing through the territorial waters of the UK and Ireland. Coastal communities in both countries must be worried about the precedent this decision gives and I am in full solidarity with our friends in Canada that this decision needs to be reconsidered. We don't want them passing by our waters and putting our communities at risk - the waste should remain in Canada and be safely managed there.”

Bailie Regan added:

“I will be writing to the Governments and nuclear safety regulators in Ireland, the UK, Norway and Sweden to urge them to carefully scrutinise the risks of sending such shipments over their own territorial waters and encourage them to say no. I am also writing to the Canadian nuclear regulator and the groups campaigning in Canada and the United States to stop these shipments taking place in the first place. By working together I hope we can reverse this alarming decision.”

Ends.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

Further information

Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930186 s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk

Notes to Editors:

(1) Media release of the Council of Canadians

MEDIA RELEASE - For Immediate Release, February 5, 2011

Council of Canadians condemns CNSC approval of radioactive shipments through Great Lakes

The Council of Canadians condemns the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's decision late Friday to approve the transport of 16 radioactive steam generators by ship across the Great Lakes to Sweden.

"The Great Lakes is a shared commons, public trust and protected bioregion," says national chairperson Maude Barlow. "These shipments will put the drinking water of 40 million people at risk. Announcing this decision late on a Friday is a clear indication that the CNSC knows that there will be widespread opposition to their decision."

Last April, Bruce Power applied for a special license from the CNSC because the steam generators failed to meet CNSC's own Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations. The radioactive levels also exceed legal limits set out in the International Atomic Energy Agency's Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material by 50 times.

Bruce Power plans to ship the 16 bus size steam generators to Sweden for decontamination, with the most radioactive parts of the generators being transported back across the Great Lakes and stored near its nuclear power plant on Lake Huron. The corporation has at least 64 steam generators that it wants to ship to Sweden.

"These shipments set an extremely dangerous precedent," says national water campaigner Emma Lui. "This opens the door to transporting radioactive waste that exceeds legal limits across our lakes."

The International Institute of Concern for Public Health has noted that radionuclides found in Great Lakes water, including tritium, carbon-14, caesium and long-lived iodine-129, pose serious health hazards even at low levels. An accident with just one of Bruce Power's numerous planned shipments could prove to be disastrous.

Nearly 80 groups provided written submissions and half of them - including the Council of Canadians - intervened at a public hearing last September in Ottawa. The groups expressed concerns regarding Bruce Power's insufficient emergency response plans, the lack of an environmental assessment and the failure to consult adequately with communities.

Ends

For More Information:

Dylan Penner, Media Officer, Council of Canadians, 613-795-8685, dpenner@canadians.org

Emma Lui, National Water Campaigner, Council of Canadians

Tel: 613-233-4487 Ext. 234 Fax: 613-233-6776 Email: elui@canadians.org

<http://www.canadians.org/water>

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES