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**EXTENDED EDITION ON FUKUSHIMA INCIDENT –**  
THE NFLA WISHES TO RECORD ITS DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY THE EARTHQUAKE, TSUNAMI AND EVACUATIONS IN JAPAN. THESE CONCERNS HAVE BEEN PASSED ON TO THE MAYORS OF HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI, WHO ARE IN CONTACT WITH COUNCILS IN THE AFFECTED AREA.



Smoke billows out of Fukushima reactor number 3 after Japanese earthquake and tsunami devastates the plant

## Fukushima blast – a game changer?

On March 11<sup>th</sup> the world's worst nuclear accident since the Chernobyl disaster took place in Fukushima, Japan.

Following a 9.0 earthquake and 16m tsunami wave damaged 4 of the 6 reactors at the plant, radioactive smoke and water has billowed out amidst continuing

concern over a full reactor meltdown.

A 20kms exclusion zone has been put in place and the incident labeled as a category 5 / 6 incident by the IAEA – Chernobyl was a 7.

Attempts are continuing to stop full reactor meltdown, but sea contamination has been

calculated at over 4000 times the permitted limit, whilst a number of workers have been taken to hospital. Soil, food and water have all been contaminated.

This incident has hit the 'nuclear renaissance' hard with safety reviews across the globe. This edition highlights NFLA's responses in the UK / Ireland nuclear debate.

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## NFLA and 30 NGOs present demands to Energy Minister

Prior to a March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting with UK Energy Minister Lord Marland & DECC officials on nuclear issues, the NFLA co-ordinated & presented a set of 8 key demands on nuclear safety as a result of the Fukushima incident.

These demands are summarised on page 2 & 3 below.

The joint statement was agreed between the NFLA, Friends of the Earth, NCG, CND and over 30 other nuclear concerned groups. It was also submitted to the UK and Irish media.

The demands were discussed at the DECC / NGO stakeholder dialogue meeting in London and were

welcomed by the Government as fully explaining the policy position of NFLA and other groups.

There was wide discussion about major emergency planning concerns. It was noted that the HSE review would be critical in UK nuclear safety standards and building new nuclear reactors.

Below is a summary of NFLA / N.G.O.'s joint demands on UK nuclear safety -

- The nuclear safety review should be in public and be fully open & transparent. It should consider safety at a wide range of nuclear facilities.
- The 'exclusions' arrangement in the HSE's Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process must be abandoned.
- There should be NO public subsidies for nuclear new build.
- The health effects of low level radiation on land and in the marine environment need to be independently verified.
- Ministerial speeches that they have confidence that the proposed policy for new nuclear build radioactive waste management will exist should cease.
- The Government should commission an independent security review on current & projected radioactive waste and spent fuel interim storage arrangements.
- Government & the NDA need to resolve over 100 identified scientific and technical uncertainties before developing a deep-underground radioactive waste repository.

## UK nuclear safety inquiry and EU 'stress tests'

The UK Energy Minister Chris Huhne has instigated a full safety review of UK nuclear reactors following the Fukushima incident. This will be conducted by the Head of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, Mike Weightman.

The inquiry follows a

decision of the European Commission that all EU reactors must undergo a series of 'stress tests' to check their safety and integrity.

It has not been determined to date what the stress tests will exactly consider.

The UK safety review

will publish an interim report in mid June and a final report by the end of September.

The NFLA will submit concerns over marine pollution, structural integrity and emergency planning as part of its concerns following the incident in Japan.

## NFLA Steering Committee determines policy and meets NDA

The NFLA Steering Committee met in Manchester on March 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Fukushima incident and all aspects of nuclear policy.

The NFLA/ NGO joint statement of demands were fully endorsed and supported and it was agreed to work closely

with other groups to highlight the link between this incident and wider concerns over the safety of nuclear power. Members also agreed that the Secretariat contact all UK and Ireland local authorities to note such concerns & encourage membership.

The meeting also allowed for discussion over engagement with the NDA on waste issues. Bill Hamilton of the NDA attended and a wide range of views across nuclear policy were discussed. It was agreed that the NFLA liaise further with the NDA on future critical engagement.

## Energy Bill loophole may mean we all pay for nuclear

In responding to recent UK Gov't consultations on nuclear waste, insurance and reforms of the electricity market the NFLA has noted its concerns that the taxpayer may well end up paying the final bill for new nuclear build.

The UK's 'Guardian' newspaper highlighted such concerns by noting that section 102 of the Energy Bill may exempt nuclear utilities from paying for certain liabilities following an accident, with the costs likely to be passed on to

the taxpayer. This is likely to be the case in Japan where the utility may have to be nationalised to fund making the site safe and dealing with its liabilities. The NFLA will keep a close eye on this development.

#### NFLA / NGO demands (continued):

- The Government should abandon the option of using separated weapons-grade plutonium as reprocessed Mox fuel for use by UK and foreign customers.

#### NFLA press releases March 2011

- 30<sup>th</sup> March - NFLA highlight emergency planning concerns to DECC following Fukushima.
- 27<sup>th</sup> March - NFLA / NGOs make 8 demands of nuclear sector as a result of Fukushima accident
- 16<sup>th</sup> March – Fukushima incident: why is UK not closing down 1970's nuclear reactors
- 14<sup>th</sup> March – NFLA statement on the Fukushima incident.
- 8<sup>th</sup> March – Newry and Dundalk welcome A-bomb exhibition to Ireland.
- 1<sup>st</sup> March, with KIMO – Sellafield radioactive discharges into the Irish Sea

## New nuclear submarine reactors to use different design

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that new nuclear powered submarines (that may host Trident missiles) will not use Fukushima style reactors when built.

Defence Secretary Liam Fox confirmed the MOD now prefers the US designed PWR3 propul-

sion units rather than the PWR2 design in current Astute class and refurbished Vanguard subs. Like the Fukushima reactor, the PWR2 relies on back-up systems for emergency cooling. These failed in Japan.

The PWR3 possess a 'passive' cooling system,

meaning they are less reliant on external power. There are also additional ways to inject coolant in them. The decision will cost an extra £261 million to the budget. This follows FOI publication by CND Scotland noting a MOD report of serious safety concerns with the Astute class subs.

## Packed NFLA Ireland meeting talks about Fukushima

The NFLA All-Ireland Forum held a packed meeting in Newry & Mourne Council offices to consider Fukushima, Sellafield, Mayors for Peace and the work of Chernobyl charities at its spring seminar.

Prior to the meeting, the A-bomb exhibition was opened on March

31<sup>st</sup> in Newry Arts Centre with generous media coverage.

Councillors from across Ireland attended the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and heard from the NFLA Secretary of the implications of the Japan nuclear incident and of increased Sellafield discharges.

An overview of the work of Mayors for Peace was provided from its Ypres Secretariat and local Irish Chernobyl charities talked about their project work in Belarus.

Seminars in the Dail and Stormont and meetings with the new Irish Governments are also being considered.

## Westminster seminar – 'Fukushima: lessons learned'

Coinciding with the interim HSE nuclear safety report, the NFLA are co-operating with the NCG and the 'No Need for Nuclear' group to host an important seminar in Westminster on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Entitled 'Fukushima – lessons learned' the seminar will be chaired by former SDC Chair Jonathan Porritt. Expert speakers include Dr John Large, Prof Tom Burke, Prof Steve Thomas and Dr Paul Dorfman.

A cross party panel of supporting MPs are involved such as Caroline Lucas, Paul Flynn & Mark Durkan.

The NFLA Chair and Vice Chairs will attend & English Forum reps should try to attend.

**NFLA CONSULTATION RESPONSES, MARCH:**

*All on NFLA website.*

- Electricity market reforms (DECC)
- Funded decommissioning for new reactors (DECC)
- Waste Transfer Pricing for new reactors (DECC)
- Dounreay waste substitution (Scottish Govt / DECC)

**Letters to the press in March 2011:**

*All placed together on the NFLA website.*

- Fukushima and the financial costs – a warning to the UK?
- Nuclear poll shows there's no desire for new build in UK.
- Climate change and which energy source to use.
- Would Wylfa B be safe? And what about Wylfa A?
- UK Government needs to urgently check ageing reactors.
- Fukushima – why Ireland should remain nuclear free.
- Boris should listen to Geoffrey Lean before discounting the 'doom mongers'.
- Fukushima shows there is no need for nuclear.

## Mayors for Peace passes 4500 membership milestone

The global Mayors for Peace group passed an important milestone in March when its 4500<sup>th</sup> member joined what is now the largest local government body in the world.

There are now 4540 members from 144 countries. This comes at a time when, though

rhetoric has been positive, there are concerns over increasing research into nuclear weapons in the US, UK and France.

The Chair of Mayors for Peace, Mayor Akiba of Hiroshima, will conclude his term of office as Mayors for Peace Chair on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Warm

letters of best wishes were sent to the Mayor by the NFLA Chair.

Mayors for Peace staff spoke at the NFLA Ireland meeting to seek new members on the island. Mayors for Peace are also in close contact with Japanese Councils affected by the recent disaster.

## Other NFLA news in brief

Chernobyl 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary events – April 26<sup>th</sup> will be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. A special NFLA / CCP / GMCND commemorative concert will take place in Manchester on the evening of March 25<sup>th</sup> with large-scale events in Birmingham, London and across Europe.

NFLA National Forum meetings - The NFLA Scottish Forum held a business meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and discussed in detail relevant Scottish nuclear and renewable issues. The NFLA All Ireland Forum held its spring seminar in Newry on April 1<sup>st</sup> as noted above.

The NFLA Welsh Forum holds its next seminar on June 3<sup>rd</sup> in Cardiff looking at Welsh energy issues for the new Welsh Assembly Government.

The NFLA English Forum is subsuming its spring seminar into the Westminster seminar on June 14<sup>th</sup>, to which all members should attend.

## Forthcoming NFLA meetings

NFLA All Ireland Forum seminar, Newry, April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011.  
NFLA / CCP / GMCND 'Chernobyl 25' commemorative concert, St Ann's Church, Manchester, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011.

NFLA Welsh Forum seminar, Cardiff, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011.  
NFLA English Forum seminar, as part of the NCG Westminster seminar, London, June 14<sup>th</sup> 2011.

NFLA Scotland Forum meeting, June 17<sup>th</sup> 2011, date & location tbc.  
NFLA UK & Ireland St'ering Committee, Manchester, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2011.