

Nuclear Free Local Authorities **briefing**



Date: 16th April 2013

No.108

Subject: Summary of NFLA Steering Committee, Manchester Town Hall, 22nd March 2013

1. Introduction

The NFLA Steering Committee was opened by the NFLA Chair, Councillor Hackett, who welcomed all to Manchester Town Hall. He welcomed Councillor Butler of Glasgow City Council to his first NFLA Steering Committee meeting.

In a short discussion it was decided to cancel the afternoon seminar due to the forecast of more severe weather affecting travel routes.

The NFLA Steering Committee held a minute's silence to remember the second anniversary of the tsunami, earthquake and nuclear disaster at Fukushima.

2. National NFLA Forum meetings

The NFLA Secretary provided a report of the work of the NFLA Forums:

NFLA English Forum –

The NFLA English Forum held a very well attended joint seminar with the NFLA Steering Committee following its business meeting on 25th January. The meeting heard from three speakers who lived near the Fukushima reactor in March 2011 and was highly informative about some of the critical unresolved issues since the disaster.

Another joint NFLA English Forum / Steering Committee seminar had been organised to follow on from the March 22nd Steering Committee meeting. Confirmed speakers for it were NuLEAF Secretary Stewart Kemp on radioactive waste management policy, Helen Rimmer and Naomi Ludhe-Thomas on shale gas and planning policy and the NFLA Secretary on the transportation and wider issues around contaminated scrap metal. Due to the inclement weather this seminar had to be postponed and will now take place on June 28th in Manchester Town Hall.

NFLA Scotland Forum –

The NFLA Scotland Forum held a very useful and informative business meeting in Glasgow City Chambers on the 1st February. There was considerable discussion on Scottish radioactive waste policy, shale gas issues, fuel poverty and energy efficiency matters. Cllr Brown was reappointed as the Forum Vice Convenor. Changes to Glasgow City Council's NFLA representative means the Convenor's post will be appointed at the next NFLA Scotland meeting.

The NFLA Secretary has also recently co-operated with staff in Abolition 2000, CND Scotland, Mayors for Peace and Parliamentarians for Non-proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament (PNND) to

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develop a high profile NFLA Scotland seminar on nuclear weapons non-proliferation in Edinburgh on 19th April. The seminar includes four prominent speakers – the former Mayor of Hiroshima, the Chair of the New Zealand NFLA movement, a former New Zealand Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control and Bill Kidd MSP. A reception in the Scottish Parliament has also been organised for 18th April.

NFLA Welsh Forum –

The next meeting of the NFLA Welsh Forum will be a seminar in Torfaen Town Hall on the 12th April. The seminar will consider Welsh energy futures, the risks of new build at Wylfa and Hinkley Point, the possibility of Dalgety Bay type incident in Wales, concerns over reductions to the monitoring regime for radioactivity levels in food, and an overview of NFLA / Mayors for Peace's role in the nuclear weapons debate. It was noted that there is now a new Welsh Government Environment Minister who the NFLA Secretary will write to.

NFLA All Ireland Forum –

The NFLA All Ireland Forum Co-Chairs and Secretary, and the NFLA Secretary will be holding a follow-up meeting with officials from the Republic of Ireland Department of the Environment to discuss the Irish Government's recent report on Sellafield. This will be held on March 2nd.

The Forum's next seminar will be held in Fingal County Hall, north Dublin on May 3rd. The meeting will include a presentation on the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland's assessment of the potential radiological risks of a proposed UK new nuclear programme. There will also be a consideration of the recently announced huge wind farm development being planned in the Irish Midlands. This could have a major role in the production of a substantial amount of additional wind energy across the British and Irish Isles.

Agreed: To note the report. To encourage NFLA members to attend the relevant Forum seminar.

3. Membership recruitment and administration issues

The NFLA Secretary reported that NFLA membership has seen four new members join the organisation in financial year 2012/13. The upcoming Forum seminars provide a further opportunity for membership recruitment. The NFLA Secretary also encouraged members to inform him promptly if budgetary issues for 2013/14 may affect its NFLA membership.

The NFLA Secretariat has started advertising the four types of individual supporter membership agreed at the 2012 NFLA AGM. A number of individual members have joined the organisation under the 'retired' and 'interested member' categories.

The NFLA Secretariat will be transferring the NFLA library to the Praxis Centre, Leeds Metropolitan University for safe-keeping and as an academic resource in early April. The Steering Committee suggested a future meeting be held in Leeds to give members an opportunity to visit it.

Agreed: To note the report. To consider a future Steering Committee meeting in Leeds in order to visit the NFLA 'archive'.

4. Mayors for Peace and Nuclear Weapons update

The NFLA Secretary provided an overview of the NFLA's involvement in co-operating with the Hiroshima and Nagasaki-led Mayors for Peace, and wider issues in the nuclear weapons debate.

a) Mayors for Peace matters - International development of Mayors for Peace -

As of March 1st 2013, 5,551 towns and cities were members of Mayors for Peace in 157 countries.

A Mayors for Peace delegation took part in the UN Conference in Oslo on the 'Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons', which was held on March 3 – 5. A follow-up conference will be held in Mexico in 2014.

The Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Secretariat and International Secretariat are planning for the United Nations Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Preparatory Conference in Geneva, Switzerland on April 22nd – 25th. The NFLA Chair and NFLA Secretary will attend meetings of the Mayors for Peace and take part in its delegation to the NPT Preparatory Conference on behalf of Vice President City Manchester.

UK and Ireland development of Mayors for Peace -

There are now 88 members of Mayors for Peace in the UK and Ireland. New members include Cardiff City Council and Orkney Islands Council. The UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Working Group met in Tower Hamlets, London on February 18th and held a very useful discussion on the future development of Mayors for Peace, both internationally and in the UK & Ireland. It was agreed to develop a questionnaire to all Mayors for Peace members in the UK and Ireland to consider what its UK & Irish members know about the organisation and seek opinions on its future direction. The NFLA Secretary is working with the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Secretariat in Ypres to develop the questionnaire, which will go out after the local elections.

The NFLA Secretary has just sent a number of voluntary donations to the Ypres Secretariat totalling 1,100 Euros. This is a very useful starting amount in developing the concept of a small membership fee to being a Mayors for Peace member. 2013/14 voluntary invoices will be issued after the local elections.

Mayors for Peace Executive and General Conference –

The four-yearly Mayors for Peace Executive and General Conference will be held in Hiroshima on 3rd – 5th August 2013. All Mayors for Peace members have received an invitation to attend an event which will determine the wider structure and policy of the organisation. Mayors for Peace Board Members Manchester and Glasgow are considering whether they can attend. The NFLA Steering Committee agreed to consider attendance at the conference following decisions made by Manchester and Glasgow.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bomb exhibition-

The NFLA's Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb exhibition is being hosted at Edinburgh Central Library in February and early March 2013. It will then move on to Fife. Other NFLA members are encouraged to host it.

b) Nuclear weapons matters -

ICAN-UK Westminster event and involvement in the Oslo Conference

The NFLA are a supporting partner organisation of the UK branch of the International Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons (ICAN-UK). This group was one of the most active at the Oslo Conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, where it presented a series of five reports to the Civic Forum, a parallel part of the Conference. ICAN-UK held a cross-party event to launch their reports to the Conference, which was held in the Westminster Parliament on February 28th. The reports profiled at the Westminster event are on the ICAN website (<http://www.icanw.org/unitedkingdom>).

The Oslo Conference was generally well attended with a large number of Governments and a considerable civil society involvement. It also allowed the opening up of an important debate about what actual devastation would happen in the world in the event of even a limited nuclear weapons attack. None of the five major nuclear weapon states (UK, USA, Russia, China, and France) attended the conference, which they claimed to be a diversion from the key issues from reducing nuclear weapons proliferation.

Concerns over nuclear weapon proliferation in North Korea, Iran and in regards to the civil war in Syria -

In February 2013 the North Korean Government announced they had successfully undertaken an underground nuclear weapon test. The test was roundly condemned by Governments around the world and confirmed that North Korea's nuclear weapons capability are increasing in sophistication. The Mayor of Hiroshima, on behalf of the Mayors for Peace Executive, sent a letter to the North Korean Government deploring the weapons test, as it has done of nuclear tests by

Pakistan, India and the United States over the past 12 months. The North Korean Government has subsequently increased the rhetoric with direct challenges to the South Korean Government. Extensive new sanctions on North Korea, supported by its allies China and Russia, were passed in early March by the United Nations.

Concerns also exist about whether the Iranian Government is seeking to develop a nuclear weapons programme in parallel with a civil nuclear power programme. There are claims and counter-claims on both sides of this debate so it is difficult to know of Iran's intentions and how close it is to possessing nuclear weapons. In his first public comments on the issue, the new US Secretary of State John Kerry stated, that despite tough sanctions and continued diplomacy, Iran was getting closer to acquiring nuclear weapons. New talks between Iran, the EU and the US have commenced and again the NPT PrepCon will be an important area for international discussion on such matters.

A further concerning issue in reference to reducing the proliferation of nuclear weapons regards the collapse of Syria into a bitter civil war. Though Syria's nuclear weapons intentions were curtailed some years ago, partially through an Israeli air attack, it is not clear what the extent of Syria's nuclear capability is. With the fragmentation of the state, the possibility of any nuclear facilities getting in the hands of more extremist factions does remain. The threat, like with Iran, of a further Israeli military attack can not be ruled out.

Radioactive leak of Royal Naval nuclear submarine HMS Tireless -

In mid February 2013 a Parliamentary answer by the UK Defence Minister confirmed that the nuclear powered (though not nuclear armed) submarine HMS Tireless had been forced to return to the Faslane base due to a leak of radioactive coolant in its reactor compartment. The submarine was then transported down to the Devonport site for repair.

The NFLA Secretary has been co-operating with other groups to investigate further the detail of this incident and the risks and dangers to the marine environment, to the staff and in transporting the submarine through the Irish Sea. It is aimed to raise this serious matter with the Republic of Ireland Government, in the NFLA's forthcoming meeting with them, in terms of the lack of notification with this incident from the UK Government.

Atomic Weapons Establishment "exposed people to risk" –

An investigation by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) has found "clear evidence" that the structure of a nuclear processing facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has degraded to such an extent that "normal operations can no longer be justified". The ONR report concluded that "people were exposed to risk" by AWE's failure to adequately inspect and maintain the structure of the building at its main processing site at Aldermaston. ONR has issued AWE plc with a formal 'Improvement Notice' requiring the company to complete a programme of remedial actions to tackle the problems by the end of 2013.

Structural surveys at the affected building revealed that the presence of corrosion did not render the building unsafe under normal circumstances, but that the ability of the structure to withstand seismic events or extreme weather - particularly high winds, snow, or storms - had been reduced. ONR's report concluded that normal operations in the facility "could no longer be justified". Radioactive materials were removed from affected areas of the building and work was limited to operations deemed necessary in the interests of safety, including repair work.

£800 million contract for nuclear submarine reactor production -

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a ten year contract worth around £800 million with Rolls-Royce Submarines to deliver and maintain nuclear propulsion plants for the Royal Navy's nuclear powered submarines. The contract will assist Rolls-Royce to take forward a programme for construction of nuclear power plants for the remaining Astute class submarines and for the 'Successor' Trident replacement submarine, if the UK Parliament gives the go-ahead for the Successor programme after the next election.

Norwegian government pension fund withdraws investment from AWE partner - The Norwegian Government's pension fund has withdrawn its investments from Jacobs Engineering –

one of the parent companies behind the consortium which manages the Atomic Weapons Establishment – because of its involvement in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. The Norwegian Ministry of Finance announced last month that it had excluded Jacobs Engineering Plc and another US multinational, Babcock & Wilcox Co, from the investment portfolio of the Government Pension Fund Global (GPGF) because of their involvement in nuclear weapons production. The value of the Norwegian fund's shares in the two companies at the end of 2011 was US\$33.71 million.

Coulport nuclear weapons store to remain exempt from scrutiny by government nuclear watchdog -

New arrangements for private sector management of work at the Coulport nuclear weapons store in the west of Scotland will not require the site to be licensed under the regulatory regime for the nuclear sector, according to the ONR. Instead, the site will remain under the internal control of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), with nuclear operations authorised by the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator (DNSR).

In January 2013 the Ministry of Defence transferred Strategic Weapon System support work at the Coulport site from Royal Navy and MoD civilian personnel to private sector contractors. After a visit to Coulport in November 2012, ONR concluded that, despite the outsourcing arrangements, overall control and responsibility for the site still remains with the Ministry of Defence through the Naval Base Commander (Clyde). Coulport therefore remains exempt from the Nuclear Installations Act and will remain outside ONR's regulatory control.

Agreed: To note the report.

5. Nuclear new build

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on a wide range of issues around the proposed development of new nuclear power stations in England and Wales.

Developments relating to a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point –

The prospects on whether EDF will both get planning approval and a positive investment decision for building a new nuclear reactor(s) at Hinkley Point in Somerset are now reaching a critical period. On the regulatory front the Environment Agency gave approval for environmental permits for a new Hinkley reactor in early March – the NFLA is seeking a meeting with the Agency on its response to the consultation. The Energy Minister Ed Davey gave outline planning permission to the site following deliberation of the report by the National Infrastructure Directorate. Thus, on the technical and regulatory side of the debate most of the pre-licensing detail for approving a new build site has been successfully approved by the nuclear regulators.

On the investment side, EDF is in detailed and prolonged discussions with the UK Government on reaching a 'strike price' in the contracts for difference with the UK Government, a component part of the UK Energy Bill. Media reports have suggested these critical talks have come close to breaking down a number of times. The reports suggest EDF are looking for a strike price of around £96 per megawatt hour (MWh) for Hinkley Point with guarantees made over a 40 year period by the Government. This would assist EDF in ensuring it gets around a 10% profit on its investment over the duration of such a contract. A media release from four former Chief Executives of Friends of the Earth Porritt argues such a contract would effectively be a £50 billion bet by the UK Government on the wholesale price of electricity in 2050.

At the DECC NGO Forum meeting of February 28th, a senior Government official informed the group that the detail of the contracts and associated information between the UK Government and EDF (apart from that which affects 'commercial confidentiality') would be laid out to Parliament once an agreement is made. However, even if a mutually agreed 'strike price' comes out of the Government–EDF talks there are two significant hurdles that will still have to be overcome. Firstly, the agreement would have to be considered by the European Commission to determine if it is a legal form of state aid or not. Independent commentators have suggested this could take as long as two years as the agreement would set a precedent across the EU.

Secondly, with the withdrawal of Centrica from the consortium to build Hinkley Point, EDF is still expected to need a funding partner for the £14 billion project. Previous media reports suggest it has been in talks with Chinese energy companies, but little has been reported in the last few weeks on this matter.

If the talks between EDF and the Government were to break down then a major question mark over new nuclear would exist. The Japanese utility Hitachi, who are seeking to build new reactors at Wylfa and Oldbury, have indicated they would question further investment in the project if a 'contract for difference' between EDF and the Government is not agreed. It should also be noted that other energy companies have publicly stated concern that EDF could be receiving an unfair financial advantage through such a deal.

Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process -

As noted at the last NFLA Steering Committee, in early December 2012 the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) confirmed that all outstanding issues with EDF's EPR nuclear reactor design had been resolved and it was now suitable for construction. The speed with which the last 12 outstanding issues were resolved surprised many in the nuclear industry and the wider NGO community. In December the ONR said they would publish the process for how they made this decision in March 2013. To date, these have not been published.

The ONR have confirmed that they have begun consideration of Hitachi's new reactor design which it would like to develop on the Oldbury and Wylfa sites in January 2013. This design will go through the exact same process as the EPR and AP-1000 generic design assessment process. It is anticipated that this is likely to take between 3 – 4 years before approval is given.

UK Government draft energy bill -

The UK Government's Energy Bill has reached the halfway point in detailed Parliamentary committee consideration. In his assessment of progress, Energy Bill Committee Member Alan Whitehead MP said that: "Improvements to the accountability of the system operator, promised amendments on demand side reduction and some greater clarity on the system for underwriting renewable and low carbon energy production have all been written into the bill, or will be shortly."

Alan Whitehead added: "(T)here is still a sense of 'work in progress' surrounding the Bill, and a key area is that of the certainty or otherwise of having a decarbonisation target on the face of the Bill." The issue of a 2030 decarbonisation target, which was omitted in the Energy Bill, is the main issue where there may be a cross-party Parliamentary revolt. A number of Liberal Democrat and Conservative MPs have called for such a target to be placed in the Bill, and Labour has repeatedly stated their support for such a target. A recent joint letter to the media by a large number of prominent businesses and business organisations has also put its name to this campaign.

Development of the 'European Cities Network against Nuclear Power' -

The NFLA are co-operating with the City of Vienna and a number of other prominent European cities (in Germany, Ireland, Norway, Cyprus and Belgium) who are developing a network of like-minded Councils opposed to new nuclear build and seeking a nuclear power free Europe. In late February 2013 a draft proposal for such activities has been proposed by Vienna City Council, which includes changing its name to 'Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe'.

The Environmental Council of Vienna (essentially the cross-party Environment Committee of the Council) is planning a visit to the UK in the week of May 12th – May 17th to look at a number of relevant environmental issues. As part of their discussions, they have invited the NFLA Chair and the NFLA Secretary to discuss further co-operation on pursuing this network and strategies to take it forward. This meeting is on the morning of May 17th in London.

Agreed: To note the report. The NFLA Chair and NFLA Secretary to attend a meeting with the Environmental Council of Vienna over further co-operation.

6. **Fukushima and nuclear safety**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on the state of the stricken Fukushima nuclear reactors and wider issues around nuclear safety standards.

ENSREG Public Consultation on Post Fukushima National Action Plans -

At the last NFLA Steering Committee it was reported that the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) had published a report it had prepared for the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) with its 'Action Plan' for implementing post-Fukushima lessons learned and actions required from the 2012 'stress test' of UK nuclear facilities.

The ENSREG are now peer-reviewing the ONR Action Plan and have asked for questions and comments from interested parties. In a brief response the NFLA Secretary encouraged ENSREG to consider the NFLA's formal submissions to the ONR on its Fukushima reports. It also recommended that it consulted the nuclear engineering reports made by the consulting engineers Large & Associates. The peer review will take place in May 2013.

Second anniversary of the Fukushima disaster, March 11th 2013 -

Major events and demonstrations were held around the world to commemorate the second anniversary of the Fukushima disaster. In the UK, a rally and vigil was held in London between DECC's headquarters, the Japanese Embassy and the headquarters of TEPCO and EDF.

The most notable demonstrations took place across Japan, including tens of thousands of people, and in Taiwan, where it was calculated 70,000 – 100,000 people took part in a demonstration that linked in to concerns over building new nuclear reactors near seismic fault areas.

General Fukushima update -

The slow progress of resolving the many and contradictory issues on the Fukushima site continue to challenge the local, national and international authorities. This has led to the establishment of an expert panel of Japanese Government and TEPCO officials to discuss possible new timelines have taken place. The group expects to submit a revised 'roadmap' by June. Independent experts say that TEPCO's original estimate of 40 years' to fully decommission the site may be much too ambitious.

Decommissioning the site is a huge and complicated task. Before on-site workers can even remove fuel from the damaged reactors they need to plug leaks in the reactor containers, caused by both melting fuel and hydrogen explosions, and cover the fuel with water in order to reduce radiation levels, a process that could take up to four years to complete. According to Greenpeace International, due to holes in the containers, 400 tons of groundwater is continuing to leak into the reactor area every day, becoming contaminated. In addition, TEPCO intentionally pumps additional cooling water into the vessels. TEPCO have admitted that it still has no idea of the exact location of the fuel or its condition. Storing radioactive water on the site is also becoming a significant problem. At present, TEPCO has 260,000 tons of water stored in tanks on the Fukushima compound, with room to store at least 60,000 more. It therefore may run out of storage space in the not too distant future.

Agreed: To note the report.

7. **Alternatives to nuclear energy**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on plans to develop a new series of NFLA reports on a range of energy issues relating to the alternatives to nuclear energy. These reports include:

- A study of the environmental consequences of shale gas fracking and implications for local authorities in the UK and Ireland.
- An overview of the potential of new renewable energy sources not considered in detail by the NFLA previously, such as biofuels, geothermal energy and biomass in the UK and Ireland.
- An overview of the issues for local authorities on the issue of fuel poverty and the benefits of expanding energy efficiency programmes in the UK and Ireland.
- An overview of the upcoming Green Deal and the Green Investment Bank and a comparative study of developments in Germany and Austria.

The first two of these reports were published in early February and are on the NFLA website. The other two reports will be completed by the end of April. The Steering Committee welcomed the publication of these reports as clarifying NFLA policy and for informing member authorities of a number of important developments in UK & Irish energy policy.

Agreed: To note the report and welcome the NFLA Policy Briefings.

8. Radioactive waste management

The NFLA Secretary provided a report on developments in radioactive waste management policy.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) developments -

The NFLA Secretariat made a formal and robust submission to the NDA's draft Business Plan for 2013 – 2016. In the NDA Business Plan, total planned expenditure for 2013/2014 is £3.2 billion, of which £2.3 billion is provided by UK Government and £0.9 billion by income from commercial operations. The NDA plan to spend £3 billion on site programmes in 2013/14, with £1.6 billion of this targeted at Sellafield, while 'non-site expenditure' is expected to be £0.2 billion. This non-site expenditure includes skills development, socio-economic, Research & Development (R&D) and insurance.

The contract process for determining who will manage and operate the Magnox Ltd and RSRL sites has now seen the original list of consortiums whittled down to four groups – CAS Restoration Partnership (formed by CH2M, Areva and Serco), Reactor Site Solutions (Bechtel and Energy Solutions), the Babcock Fleur Partnership and AMEC / Atkins. The contract is valued at £7 billion. It is expected that this process will be completed by the end of 2013. The NFLA Secretariat is assisting NuLEAF in hosting a seminar on the importance of liaison with local government on the final contracts, which will be held in Manchester in June 2013.

Managing Radioactive Waste Safely - West Cumbria Partnership consultation -

On January 30th 2013 the Cabinet of Cumbria County Council decided 7 – 3 not to go ahead with expressing an interest to find a suitable site in the county that could be developed into a deep-underground radioactive waste repository. Though Copeland and Allerdale Councils did vote in favour of going ahead with such a process the Government confirmed that Cumbria's vote meant that the discussion in the county was at an end. The Government has met with Council leaders on the matter and has said they will take stock of Cumbria's decision before determining how to take the policy forward.

The decision has inevitably created much rancour in Cumbria and surprised many in the county and further afield. From the speech of the Leader of the Council, Cumbria's decision was determined by a view that it was unlikely that a geologically suitable site could be found in the county for a repository, over other technical and scientific uncertainties and on the negative effect to the tourist trade and the Lake District National Park. It should be acknowledged that a very effective local and national campaign by groups opposed to such a development in the county also had a significant impact on councillors, particularly with county council elections in May.

The decision obviously leaves a major question mark over a key part of UK nuclear policy. The UK Government has initially said they will re-open the volunteerism process again, but given no other Council (beyond Shepway in Kent which was stopped by a negative local referendum result) has put their name forward previously; it is uncertain if other Councils would put their name forward now.

A further outcome of Cumbria's decision was that the Council urged Government to improve interim storage management at Sellafield, particularly following the highly negative criticism of the site by both the National Audit Office and the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. The Steering Committee welcomed this initiative. The decision also puts a question mark over new nuclear build, as a key argument of the Government in its National Policy Statement was that new nuclear build could go ahead as the radioactive waste issue would be resolved by a deep-underground repository.

Developments at Sellafield -

To contribute further to this debate, the NFLA Secretariat has placed on its website a Friends of the Earth (FOE) Cumbria report on Sellafield and dealing with the nuclear waste issue in the county. The report 'Towards a Safer Cumbria – How government, regulators and the NDA have neglected nuclear waste in Cumbria' has been developed by the NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor, and was fully funded by FOE UK.

The report considers radioactive waste management at Sellafield and across Cumbria and outlines expensive policy blunders by public authorities which have scarred the county and slowed down progress with developing an effective waste policy. It particularly outlines three of the most expensive blunders – the development of the Thorp reprocessing and plutonium separation plant, the often inadequate management of Sellafield's High Level Liquid Waste Treatment Facilities and the treatment of solid wastes. The Steering Committee welcomed this report as an excellent summary of its ongoing concerns with the Sellafield site.

Dalgety Bay and Dounreay matters -

In early March 2013 the former Prime Minister and local Fife MP Gordon Brown held a Parliamentary adjournment debate to step up his call for the MOD and SEPA to agree on a firm timetable of remediation work to clean up the radioactively contaminated site at Dalgety Bay. Mr Brown commented that the MOD's investigatory report on future work it plans at Dalgety Bay was supposed to be published in January, but has still to be published to date. This will also mean plans to start remedial work in May is also likely to be delayed. The Defence Minister Andrew Rowbotham acknowledged the delay, but said the report would be published shortly and SEPA would then be in a position to determine the future course of action.

The upcoming NFLA Welsh Forum seminar will also include a presentation by Tim Deere-Jones over the possibility of former MOD sites in Wales being contaminated in a similar manner to Dalgety Bay.

Rail transports of materials containing high radioactivity have commenced from Dounreay to Sellafield, despite a wide level of local opposition. In early March 2013, the NDA also published its 'Preferred Option' Paper for the management of remaining radioactive materials at Dounreay, which it refers to as 'exotics'. The NDA report concluded that these materials should also be transported to Sellafield for long term management. The Site Licence Companies at Dounreay and Sellafield will now have to prepare a Final Business Case and submit this to the NDA Executive around the end of the financial year 2012/13 to enable final approvals of the implementation plans to be taken place. If the business case is approved movement of exotic material will commence around the end of 2014/15. It would involve in the region of around 30 – 40 journeys by either rail or sea over the period 2014 – 2020.

Update on NuLEAF and SCCORS -

The LGA group on nuclear decommissioning and radioactive waste matters, NuLEAF (Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum) met in London on the 27th February. The meeting included a lively discussion on the deep-waste repository decision and the tabling of reports on a number of radioactive waste issues similar to the NFLA agenda. The NFLA Secretary and NFLA Chair (as Manchester's representative to NuLEAF) attended the meeting. The meeting also included a seminar on the NDA's future strategy.

The process for transferring the Secretariat of SCCORS (Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances) from Dundee City Council to North Ayrshire Council is continuing. The NFLA Secretary is monitoring this matter in reference to the timetabling of the next meeting of SCCORS.

MOD Submarine Decommissioning Project (SDP) -

The NFLA Secretary is unable to attend the latest meeting of the SDP sub-group meeting in Bristol on the 20th March due to other conflicting priorities. He has received the papers for the meeting and will comment on them in due course. It is likely that local government will become more engaged in this policy debate as the MOD seek to consider potential sites for hosting

intermediate level waste from the submarines. The Cumbria decision also has a major bearing on this issue, as the likely preferred option would be to remove the most radioactive parts of redundant nuclear submarines into a deep-underground repository.

Agreed: To note the report.

9. Low level radiation and health issues

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on a number of issues relating to the potential effects of low level radiation on human health.

Radiation in Food monitoring procedures review -

In December 2012, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) announced a public review on the way it monitors radioactivity in the food environment (RIFE). The FSA notes that an annual monitoring programme has been in place for more than 25 years and claimed that "no food safety risks have been identified during this period". As part of this review the FSA have identified their 'preferred option' as "maintaining consumer safety with a more proportionate surveillance programme in line with the low risks from radioactivity in food. *This would include continuing to monitor food around all licensed nuclear sites while reducing background monitoring away from nuclear sites*"

The NFLA commissioned the independent environmental consultant Tim Deere-Jones to develop a detailed response to the review. The submission can be found on the NFLA website. The NFLA response concluded that the current programme for monitoring doses of marine derived radioactivity in food undertaken by the FSA is not fit for purpose, in that it can not provide sufficient data to justify the FSA claim that there is a "low risk from radioactivity in food".

WHO report on low level radiation exposure from the Fukushima reactor leak -

On February 28th the World Health Organisation (WHO) published its report considering the health risks associated with the Fukushima nuclear power plant. Their overarching conclusion was that, for the general population inside and outside of Japan, the predicted risks are low and no observable increases in cancer rates above baseline risks are anticipated. However, the WHO report did note that the estimated risk for specific cancers in certain subsets of the population in Fukushima Prefecture has increased and, as such, it called for long term continued monitoring and health screening for those people.

In terms of specific cancers, for people in the most contaminated location, the estimated increased risks over what would normally be expected are:

- all solid cancers - around 4% in females exposed as infants;
- breast cancer - around 6% in females exposed as infants;
- leukaemia - around 7% in males exposed as infants;
- thyroid cancer - up to 70% in females exposed as infants (the normally expected risk of thyroid cancer in females over lifetime is 0.75% and the additional lifetime risk assessed for females exposed as infants in the most affected location is 0.50%).

The report also concludes that around one-third of emergency workers are estimated to have an increased cancer risk in line with the general population.

Agreed: To note the report.

10. Nuclear emergency planning

The NFLA Secretary confirmed that DECC and the ONR had agreed to hold a wide-ranging meeting on post-Fukushima reforms to the nuclear emergency planning regime with national NGOs. This meeting would be organised shortly and follows an intensive amount of discussion led by the NFLA Secretary and others. The Steering Committee welcomed this development.

Agreed: To note the report.

11. Date of next NFLA Steering Committee meeting

The next NFLA Steering Committee meeting will be on ***Friday 28th June in Manchester Town Hall from 11am – 1pm.***