



NFLA / KIMO / Council of Canadians Joint Media Advisory – 22nd July 2011

NFLA Policy Briefing encourages NFLA and KIMO members to pass resolutions opposing Canadian nuclear waste shipments passing through UK and Scandinavian waters

The UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities, in co-operation with KIMO International (the international marine pollution local authority group), the Canadian Coalition of Nuclear Responsibility (CCNR) and the Council of Canadians, has developed a detailed briefing outlining the concerns of a large cross-section of Councils in the UK, Ireland, North America and Scandinavia (and a diverse wide coalition of nuclear concerned and environmental groups); over a proposed shipment of radioactively contaminated steam generators from Canada to Sweden, which will pass through UK territorial waters.

The NFLA Policy Briefing (1) outlines that the Canadian nuclear power generator, Bruce Power, has permission from its regulatory authority to ship 16 redundant radioactive steam generators from its base near Lake Huron, through the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence River, across the North East Atlantic Ocean and the eastern North Sea to a Studsvik plant in Sweden for recycling. The NFLA, KIMO International, the CCNR and the Council of Canadians are part of a large coalition of over 50 groups highly alarmed by these proposed shipments, **which exceed IAEA shipping guidelines by 6 times over the ocean and by over 60 times on inland waterways.**

Bruce Power received authorisation for the shipments using a special licence from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) in February, but have delayed the shipments in order to consult with Canadian First Nation communities, which took place in late June. A date for the shipment has not been announced, but is expected soon. The steam generators are each the size of a small bus and they also do not conform to the CNSC's Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations, thus requiring the 'special arrangement'.

Councils and nuclear concerned groups believe these proposed shipments set an alarming precedent in the transport of high volumes of radioactive waste over sea and should be rather dealt with on site, as Bruce Power originally planned to do in 2006. The Policy Briefing outlines as well the deep concerns of the coalition of groups that around 90% of the less contaminated metallic portions will be melted down and blended with non-contaminated metal in a one-to-ten ratio, then sold on the open market as scrap metal for unrestricted use.

Over 177 Councils in Canada have opposed the shipments and the NFLA Policy Briefing calls on NFLA member Councils in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and KIMO International members in the British Isles and Scandinavia to pass resolutions opposing the shipments and the recycling of the scrap metal. The shipments will pass near to Irish territorial waters and directly pass into UK waters between the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands, before passing down the North Sea and the Baltic Sea to Sweden.

NFLA Chair, Bailie George Regan said: "I am highly alarmed that ships containing large volumes of radioactive materials will be passing through or near Scottish, Irish and English territorial waters on a long and quite unnecessary 7000 mile route for radioactive clean-up and subsequent scrap metal recycling. I call on Councils to pass resolutions opposing the shipments and I urge the UK, Scottish, Irish and Scandinavian Governments to actively consider opposing the shipments going through their waters. I firmly believe radioactive waste should be managed as near to its source as is practical, as formally outlined recently in current Scottish Government policy. I dread to think what the consequences of an accident or malicious attack of these shipments may mean for the marine



environment. With Fukushima already contaminating the seas, why on earth are we allowing these risky shipments to happen? We will work with our Canadian, American and Scandinavian partners in continuing to oppose them and offer sensible alternatives.”

KIMO International Secretary, John Mouat, added: “KIMO is very concerned about these shipments in general, and particularly when they reach the Baltic Sea. The decontamination and recycling of the metal would result in additional radioactive emissions to the Baltic Sea, already one of the most radioactive seas in the world. The Studsvik plant in Sweden has a poor recent record in monitoring and evaluating emissions as highlighted by the Swedish authorities to the HELCOM Baltic Sea Forum. Given this poor record KIMO is also concerned about the possibility of radioactive contaminated metal making it on to the open market for domestic and industrial use.”

The Council of Canadians Water Issues Campaigner, Emma Lui, added: “We are delighted that the NFLA and KIMO are supporting our campaign to stop these risk-laden shipments going through Canadian waters and on to Sweden. We oppose them due to the lack of proper public consultation on them, the radioactive risks of them and the threat to drinking water of communities along the travel route. We ask Bruce Power and the CSNC to think again, and look for more sustainable and safer alternatives than shipping this radiation risk thousands of kilometres to Sweden.”

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(1) The NFLA Policy Briefing on the proposed radioactive waste shipments is attached with this briefing.

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