



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

## **UK Government's decision to strip NMP of £9bn Sellafield contract – another expensive nuclear policy debacle is finally resolved**

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) welcomes the decision of the UK Government to strip the US / UK / French consortium NMP (Nuclear Management Partners) of the substantial £9bn contract to clean up the Sellafield site in Cumbria. It has to ask the question of why this is being done at this point, when it could have been done in August 2014, when the contract came up for renewal.

According to a statement by Energy Secretary Ed Davey, Sellafield Ltd would, over the next 15 months, become a subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). Mr Davey said Sellafield: "...will continue to be led by a world class team, who will be appointed and governed by a newly-constituted board of the site licence company. The new model will, in due course, see a strategic partner appointed by Sellafield Ltd, to strengthen the programme management and commercial capability at the site, as well as playing a key role in managing capital projects and contracts." (1)

NFLA are staggered it has taken the NDA and the Government so long to come to this decision. The highly critical reports of the National Audit Office, the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee and internal auditors KPMG comprehensively showed that NMP was failing to achieve the progress that was expected of them at Sellafield, and as a result it remains an 'intolerable risk' with the nuclear regulators. How much public money has been wasted in propping up NMP over the past decade?

It is an example of public largesse for the nuclear industry which includes the billions of pounds being prepared to prop up the Hinkley Point C new nuclear project. It is now estimated by the NDA that £110 billion of public money is required to decommission and clean up the UK nuclear industry over the next 120 years, with Sellafield taking up the bulk of this budget. Now is the time for the NDA and the Government to finally get to grips with these every ballooning costs and fundamentally improve the risk reduction measures at Sellafield in particular. Recent photographs of the legacy ponds at Sellafield show the extent of the dilapidation at the site, and a sense of urgency is required to fully manage and come to terms with the older facilities on the site.

It is also clear that the time has come for a fundamental rethink of UK nuclear policy. A recent report by the Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe (CNFE) Network has shown that, on a level policy playing field, renewable energy is more likely to generate greater levels of electricity in a more cost effective way than nuclear power. (2) In the view of the NFLA, it is time to reject new nuclear and put the effort of the nuclear industry into decommissioning and improved radioactive waste management storage.

NFLA Chair Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I welcome the Government and the NDA coming to their senses and deciding to take the Sellafield clean-up contract back into public hands. Now effort should be made on increased risk reduction and mitigation on the Sellafield site. The cost to the public purse of this debacle needs to be calculated and those responsible for granting NMP a 5-year extension only last year should be considering their positions carefully. Let's not forget that the £110 billion bill for nuclear decommissioning and waste management has already been nationalised and will be paid by taxpayers for a century and more. So I also urge the Government not to add to this heavy burden by offering EDF billions more in paying for Hinkley Point C. Now is the time for a renewable energy revolution involving local government that is every bit as ambitious as that produced by cities like Munich, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Vienna." (3)

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**



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For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 00 44 (0)161 234 3244.

Notes for editors:

- (1) BBC News Online, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-30785623>
- (2) Vienna Ombuds-Office for Environmental Protection, 'Renewable Energy versus Nuclear Power – Comparing Financial Support', prepared for CNFE, December 2014:  
Summary – <http://www.wua-wien.at/images/stories/publikationen/renewable-energy-versus-nuclear-power-summary.pdf>  
Full report - <http://www.wua-wien.at/images/stories/publikationen/renewable-energy-versus-nuclear-power.pdf>
- (3) NFLA Policy Briefing on Local Authority Energy Policy, August 2014  
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A239\\_\(NB125\)\\_Local\\_authority\\_energy\\_trusts.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A239_(NB125)_Local_authority_energy_trusts.pdf)

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