NFLA SC Chair’s Introduction

This Annual Newsletter provides all NFLA member authorities with a concise summary of the work of the organisation in 2014.

As the NFLA Chair, I commend it to you and your fellow councillors. A 2015 Service Plan is also available on the website which outlines its plans for the year.

Over 34 years of campaigning on nuclear policy issues

The NFLA was set-up in November 1980 and is both a respected and cogent local authority voice on all aspects of nuclear policy.

In 2014 it continued its high quality support service for member local authorities by both responding to nuclear policy issues and being pro-active in influencing the national and wider international nuclear policy agendas.

To achieve this NFLA works closely with the Mayors for Peace, KIMO International, Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe, ICAN-UK and a large number of regional and national anti-nuclear & environmental groups.

It interacts with the LGA NuLEAF & the COSLA SCCORS radio-active waste groups, national & international government agencies, key nuclear regulators and the NDA.

The following pages and the NFLA website outline some of this work in more detail and some of the key issues in the 2014 nuclear policy debate.
Who does the NFLA interact with?

On behalf of its members, the NFLA interacts with a large body of organisations on all aspects of nuclear policy.

In 2014 these included: The UK Government – DECC, DEFRA, MOD, the Foreign Office, Departments of Health, Transport, MPs & Lords.

Republic of Ireland Government – Foreign Affairs, Environment and Energy Departments, TDs & Senators.

Devolved Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Regulatory bodies – ONR, FSA, SEPA, NDA, HPA, CoRWM, RPII, COMARE and the Environment Agency.

Local Authority bodies – Mayors for Peace, Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe, KIMO, NuLEAF, & SCCORS.


NFLA Steering Committee work in 2014

The NFLA Steering Committee (SC) met in Manchester in January, June and October; in Leeds in March; and for its AGM in Edinburgh in November 2014.

Led by the NFLA Chair & Vice Chairs, the NFLA Secretary has submitted regular reports to it on all aspects of NFLA work. Reports include updates on new nuclear build, Fukushima and UK nuclear safety and on the developments to UK radioactive waste management policy.

There were reports on radiation safety and health, alternatives to nuclear power & nuclear emergency planning. All consultation responses are approved by the SC. The co-operation with Mayors for Peace, KIMO and policy work on nuclear weapons was also outlined and fully discussed.

Such work will continue at the NFLA’s Steering Committee meetings in 2015.

NFLA English Forum meetings: Leeds, Manchester, Oxford

In 2014, the NFLA English Forum held 3 seminars for its members.

In June it hosted a special visit in Manchester to the NFLA archive.

In March it held a seminar in Leeds on LA energy policy, health and weapons issues.

In October it held a seminar in Oxford on defence nuclear safety and weapons issues.

English membership has remained stable over 2014. Its first seminar in 2015 will be in March in Manchester Town Hall.
NFLA All Ireland Forum meetings: Newry & Dublin

The NFLA All Ireland Forum is an innovative cross-border initiative with Co-Chairs from the North (Cllr Michael Carr) and the Republic (Cllr Mark Dearey).

In 2014 it held a spring seminar in Newry looking at energy strategies, fracking and the impacts of UK new nuclear build.

Its winter seminar held in Dublin considered the environmental impacts of UK new nuclear; and the NFLA’s energy vision for Ireland.

In October it held a business meeting and seminar in Perth on decommissioning, LA energy policy and radwaste transport.

In November it hosted the UK & Ireland AGM in Edinburgh. A seminar was held on likely trends in nuclear policy in 2015.

The NFLA Chairs and NFLA Secretary have remained in regular contact with both Irish Governments over the year. Major local government reorganisation has been a major challenge, but it is hoped membership may increase in 2015.

Sinead Trainor from Newry & Mourne District Council provides great support to the NFLA Secretariat.

NFLA Scotland meetings: Glasgow, Stornoway & Edinburgh

The NFLA Scotland Forum met four times in 2013.

It held a February business meeting and AGM in Glasgow, where it reappointed its Chair, Councillor Bill Butler.

In April it held a business meeting in Clydebank.

In October it held a business meeting and seminar in Perth on decommissioning, LA energy policy and radwaste transport.

In November it hosted the UK & Ireland AGM in Edinburgh. A seminar was held on likely trends in nuclear policy in 2015.

Cathy Birrell from Glasgow City Council provides great support to the Forum and Pete Roche an expert policy advice service for NFLA Scotland.

Its first meeting in 2015 will be its AGM and a business meeting in Glasgow on the 5th February.

NFLA Welsh Forum meetings: Caernarfon and Cardiff

The NFLA Welsh Forum held two seminars in Wales in 2013.

Its first seminar in Caernarfon in March 2014 was a well attended public meeting with PAWB, CND and FOE.

An autumn seminar in Cardiff in November considered Fukushima, Welsh nuclear policy and FED waste.

Welsh membership has remained stable in 2014.

Its next meeting is planned for North Wales in March 2015.
Nuclear power debate – investment decision delayed to 2015

A focal point of NFLA work in 2014 has been challenging the UK Government’s assertion of the need for new nuclear build.

A key milestone for new nuclear build was the ratification by the European Commission that the Hinkley Point new nuclear deal was a legal form of state aid.

The EC decision has still not been made public, and the Austrian Government has said it will legally challenge it. Meanwhile, reports suggest EDF are looking for new funding partners for Hinkley Point. Its investment decision has been delayed till 2015.

NFLA is working with the Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe Network to challenge the deal for Hinkley and other UK new nuclear projects.

In 2014 NFLA produced a number of New Nuclear Monitors and other policy reports to challenge new build and offer real alternatives.

Radioactive waste debate – repository or near surface?

A critical part of the debate on the need for new nuclear build is how the existing large radioactive waste legacy is being dealt with.

The NFLA believe that the waste burden still requires much work to make it safe and secure. No new waste should be permitted until long-term solutions are found.

The NFLA opposes the policy of building a deep-waste repository as many scientific, technical and geological issues remain to be resolved. It is fully involved in discussion with the UK Government / RWM’s updated policy process.

The NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor is on the Scottish Government Project B’d to take forward its ‘near site, near surface’ policy. In 2014 it has also submitted its views on Welsh policy. It regularly interacts with NuLeaF, SCCORS, NDA & CoRWM.

Nuclear weapons and Trident replacement

The NFLA also remains heavily involved in the UK and international nuclear weapons debate. NFLA staff attended major nuclear weapons conferences in Sarajevo and Vienna in 2014.

NFLA invites disarmament speakers to outline developments in the debate. With its links to Mayors for Peace, it took an active part in the international debate on nuclear weapons.

NFLA signed up to the ‘Rethink Trident’ statement and it works with major disarmament groups like ICAN & CND. Trident will be a major issue in the 2015 UK election.
Co-operation with international partner groups

The NFLA has increased its cooperation with a number of international groups in nuclear policy areas in 2014.

In October 2014, it was agreed to set up a UK and Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter – a real milestone for the future. In 2014 NFLA increased its co-operation with the Vienna-led Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe, which it met with in December. It also co-operated with the marine pollution group KIMO International by attending the Feb 2014 OSPAR RSC meeting.

NFLA also gave its formal support to the groups ICAN-UK and ICBUW.

Alternatives to nuclear power – a renewable energy mix

A key part of the work of the NFLA is offering a realistic alternative to nuclear power.

Its policy is that energy needs can be provided by a wide renewable energy mix including wind, wave, district heating, hydro-electric, tidal, CHP and solar sources. This is coupled with a Councils-led and ambitious energy efficiency programme and local community micro-generation projects.

It developed this policy further with a report advocating the development of Local Authority energy policies and establishing new Energy Service Companies.

NFLA welcomes the growth of ESCOs in a number of UK Councils, and is encouraging the same growth in Ireland.

In 2015 it is expected that a number of big city ESCOs will be launched, encouraging the NFLA vision of decentralised energy to move forward across its four Forums.

NFLA Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chairs

The NFLA Chair Cllr Mark Hackett was re-elected as Chair at the 2014 AGM. As a Manchester councillor, Mark has played an influential role in various key meetings.

NFLA Forum Chairs and Vice Chairs for 2015 were also approved at the 2014 AGM and are: Scotland – Cllr Bill Butler; England – Cllr David Blackburn; Ireland – Cllr Mark Dearey (RoI) & Cllr Michael Carr (NI); Wales – Cllr Ed Bridges and Cllr Ray Davies. The NFLA Steering Committee’s Vice Chair is Cllr Norman McDonald.

Radioactive Waste Policy Briefings in 2014: All can be found on the NFLA website.

- No 46 – NDA ILW & FED waste
- No 47 – OSPAR RSC submission
- No 48 – ONR dismantling subs at Rosyth
- No 49 – Governments joint strategy on NORM waste
- No 50 – Management of overseas waste located in UK
- No 51 – Welsh Government radwaste policy
- No 52 – SEPA consultation on authorizations at Hunterston & Torness
Co-operation with key non-governmental groups

The NFLA co-operates with a number of like-minded groups, when it can, to promote its aims and objectives.

NFLA seminar speakers in 2014 have come from groups like the Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace UK, the Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates, the Nuclear Consulting Group, CND, ICAN-UK, the Nuclear Information Service and local site groups that are concerned with the development of new nuclear build. Official representatives from the likes of the Environment Agency, the RPII and NuLEAF have also spoken at various NFLA seminars.

Media releases and letters to the press in 2014:

- NFLA submitted 55 media releases in 2014 across all aspects of nuclear policy. These are on the NFLA website.
- NFLA submitted over 40 letters to the media in 2014 across all aspects of nuclear policy, which were emailed to all its members.

These were published in media outlets, such as:
- The Guardian
- The Independent
- The Times
- Financial Times
- Morning Star
- Daily Telegraph
- The Scotsman
- The Herald
- N Wales Daily Post
- Western Mail
- Irish Times
- Irish Independent
- Belfast Telegraph
- Fife Courier
- Manchester Ev News
- The Ecologist
- Perth Advertiser
- Caithness Times
- BBC / Online / Radio
- RTE / Irish radio
- Local govt media

Key priorities for the NFLA in 2015

The NFLA’s priorities for 2015 were confirmed at its 2014 AGM in Edinburgh and include:
- challenging the need for new nuclear build;
- promoting safe long-term solutions for radioactive waste;
- advocating further research on the effects of low level radiation;
- raising continuing concerns over nuclear safety & Fukushima;
- seeking improvements in nuclear emergency planning standards;
- co-operating within international networks that seek a nuclear power free and nuclear weapon free Europe and wider world;
- seeking reductions in airborne and marine radioactive discharges;
- highlighting the need for sound environmental and ethical principles across energy & nuclear weapons policy;
- advocating the benefits of renewable energy, microgeneration and energy efficiency.

The NFLA Secretary also attends the DECC NGO Forum and ONR NGO Forum meetings, the NDA’s UK Stakeholder Meeting and the MoD’s Submarine Dismantling Advisory Group. These allow NFLA to have a direct contact with key nuclear policy makers and Ministers.

Joining the NFLA and forthcoming meetings

To join the NFLA please contact the NFLA Secretariat for further details and our annual low and real value-for-money affiliation rates. Joining NFLA allows its members & officers to attend National NFLA Forum seminars and meetings and the five NFLA Steering Committee meetings. The 2015 NFLA AGM will be held at the end of the year in Ireland.

Next NFLA meeting:
The next NFLA Steering Committee is on 30th January in Manchester Town Hall. NFLA Forum meetings are being scheduled.