NFLA discuss concerns with Hendry

The joint NFLA / NGO ‘minimum demands’ letter on UK post Fukushima actions and nuclear policy was discussed with the Energy Minister Charles Hendry at the latest DECC NGO dialogue meeting in London.

The quarterly meeting allowed the NFLA Secretary and other NGO reps to discuss detail of the NFLA letter, amongst a wide-ranging discussion with the Minister and officials.

The Weightman nuclear safety review, the Nuclear National Policy Statement, the electricity market reforms, nuclear emergency planning & radioactive waste issues were considered and robust discussion took place.

The Terms of Reference of the meetings were reviewed and it was agreed to look for a NGO Co-chair and future themed issue meetings. Low-level radiation health issues & localism will be discussed at the next meeting.

NFLA / NGOs meet Weightman to discuss nuclear safety

The NFLA Secretary and a wide range of nuclear concerned groups met with Chief UK Nuclear Inspector Mike Weightman and ONR officials in London on July 5th.

Mike Weightman provided a detailed presentation of his recent IAEA visit to the Fukushima facility and discussed his interim report on UK nuclear safety. The NFLA and NGO reps raised concerns over the tone of the interim safety report and specific concerns over issues such as emergency planning, on-site waste management and the make-up of the expert panel.

‘Stop Hinkley’ advisor John Busby gave a briefing on his concerns around the two new build designs. A discussion also took place with the Head of the ONR’s Generic Design Assessment team, Kevin Allars. A report on the EPR and the AP1000 was given.

The meeting agreed to formalise a dialogue between NGOs & ONR with 3 meetings a year.
NFLA Scotland discusses nuclear emergency planning issues

The NFLA Scotland Forum held a business meeting and short seminar on nuclear emergency planning issues in Glasgow City Chambers on 1st July. The business meeting supported the moves to develop renewable energy in Scotland. It also accepted an invitation to join the Scottish Parliament’s Cross Party group on Nuclear Weapons.

A joint letter to the Scottish Energy Minister seeking a review of Hunterston B was also approved. Following the meeting, a presentation by a Senior Resilience Officer from Glasgow City Council discussed with members a wide range of nuclear emergency planning issues in Scotland. It was agreed to pursue some of these issues with the Scottish and UK Governments and develop an EP questionnaire.

NFLA English Forum / Mayors for Peace discuss Trident

The NFLA English Forum held a joint seminar with the UK Mayors for Peace Working Group in Oxford Town Hall on 8th July. The seminar followed on from a Mayors for Peace business meeting which agreed to encourage other towns and cities to join the organization and reach its target of 5000 members by August 6th – the 66th anniversary of the Hiroshima A-bomb.

The excellent seminar had presentations on a growing consensus opposed to Trident replacement. Paul Ingram of BASIC, Kate Hudson of CND & Stephen Hendry from NIS provided their informed responses on the main issues around it. The presentations will be placed on the NFLA website.

The Mayors for Peace Executive Committee will be holding an Executive Conference in Granollers, Spain on November 8th – 11th.

Minister Hogan responds to the NFLA All Ireland Forum

The new Irish Minister of the Environment, Phil Hogan, has responded in detail to a NFLA All Ireland Forum letter on nuclear policy issues and new nuclear build in the UK. The letter notes that the Minister has instigated a review of the impact of new nuclear build on Ireland from the RPII, and is ‘disappointed’ with the proposed decision to build a new reactor at Sellafield.

The Forum is meeting in Wexford in October to discuss the potential impacts of UK new build on Ireland.
NFLA Wales Forum meeting with new Welsh Minister

Following the June NFLA Welsh Forum meeting, the new Welsh Environment Minister John Griffiths has agreed to a request to meet the NFLA, Friends of the Earth Wales, PAWB and the NCG to discuss various nuclear developments and wider Welsh energy policy. It is hoped to hold the meeting later in the summer.

The NFLA Secretary and NFLA SC Policy Advisor are also working together to develop specific reports for Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England on how each country can develop a varied renewable energy mix, local microgeneration & energy efficiency over the next 30 years, without recourse for new nuclear reactors.

The reports will also concentrate on the role Councils are playing in leading this energy revolution.

Other news in brief

Nuclear submarines decommissioning
The NFLA Secretary and Fife Councillor Brian Goodall attended the latest meeting of the SDP Advisory Group and heard that a national consultation and events were planned for the autumn. The NFLA have taken an active role in sub-groups on both the consultation and the Strategic Environment Assessment.

NFLA briefing on radioactive shipments
NFLA has published a detailed joint briefing with KIMO and Canadian groups on a proposed high volume radioactive waste shipment between Canada and Sweden, passing through UK waters. It is now on the NFLA website. A model Council resolution is also in the briefing.

Vienna resolution
NFLA is fully supporting a letter of complaint led by Vienna City Council concerned about nuclear safety in the EU, post Fukushima.

Forthcoming NFLA meetings

NFLA Scotland Forum, 23rd Sept, Manchester Town Hall (tbc).

NFLA Steering Committee, 23rd Sept, Manchester Town Hall.

NFLA Welsh Forum, 30th September, Gwenedd Council Offices (date tbc).

NFLA All Ireland Forum, 21st / 28th October, Wexford (date tbc).

NFLA English Forum, 18th November, location to be confirmed.

NFLA AGM and seminar, 25th Nov, Newry & Mourne Council Offices (tbc).