

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
SIZEWELL A & B STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)  
HELD AT  
SIZEWELL SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB,  
KING GEORGES AVENUE, LEISTON IP16 4JX  
ON THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> April AT 09:30**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms Marianne Fellowes	– Co-opted Member, <i>SSG Chair</i>
Mr Pete Wilkinson	– Co-opted Member, <i>SSG Deputy Chair</i>
Cllr David Bailey	– Leiston-cum Sizewell Town Council
Dr Carolyn Barnes	– Economic Development and Regeneration Officer, Suffolk Coastal District Council
Ms Marjorie Barnes	– Public Relations Officer, EDF Energy Generation
Sgt Mark Beresford	– Leiston Branch, Suffolk Police
Mr Trevor Branton	– Co-opted Member
Cllr Graham Farrant	– Snape Parish Council
Ms Janet Fendley	– Suffolk Coast Friends of the Earth
Mrs Tracey Finn	– Secretariat, Magnox
Mr Philip Heaton	– Inspector (Sizewell A), Environment Agency
Cllr Terry Hodgson	– Suffolk Association of Local Councils
Mr Will Hooper	– Representative for the MP for Central Suffolk
Cllr Bill Howard	– Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council
Mr Jonathan Jenkin	– Stakeholder Relations Manager, NDA
Mr Tom Griffith-Jones	– Co-opted Member
Mr Alex Lord	– Environment Agency
Mr Allen Neiling	– Closure Director, Magnox
Mr Henry Padden	– Minute Taker
Cllr Peter Palmer	– Aldeburgh Town Council
Cllr Russ Rainger	– Suffolk County Council
Mrs Niki Rousseau	– Community Liaison Officer, EDF
Mr Colin Tucker	– Sizewell B Staff Representative
Mr Colin Tait	– Inspector (Sizewell B), ONR
Ms Victoria Thomas	– Inspector (Sizewell B), Environment Agency
Mr Sean Verrall	– Engineering Manager, Sizewell B
Mr Steven Payne	– Communications Manager, Magnox

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Rachel Fulcher  
Joan Girling  
Bob Hoggar  
Mike Taylor

## **CHAIR'S OPENING COMMENTS**

3680 The Chair welcomed attendees. Pete Wilkinson reported a caged parrot in the hallway, and expressed his discontent. The Chair explained that the parrot belonged to the manager, and was brought into the building during the day. It was not permanently caged. If the parrot caused allergies, it could be removed.

3681 Tom Griffith-Jones emphasised the importance of having the papers well in advance of the meeting, particularly given the meeting's length. The Chair explained that the minutes had been released later than planned due to issues with the minute taking contractor. This was why the meeting had been delayed.

### **1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3682 Apologies for absence were received from:

- Paul Morton – Station Director, Sizewell B, EDF
- Jeremy Bills – EHSS&Q Site Inspector, Magnox
- Pete Knollmeyer – Chief Nuclear Officer, Magnox
- Andy Osman – Head of Emergency Planning, Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit
- Rachel Carrington – National Farmers Union
- Cllr. Geoff Holdcroft – Suffolk Coastal District Council
- Cllr. Maureen Jones – Aldringham-cum-Thorpe & Knodishall Parish Councils
- Pat Hogan – Sizewell Residents Association

3683 There were no declarations of interest. The Chair invited the attendees to use the forms available to make disclosures of interest.

### **2. SIZEWELL A REPORTS**

#### **2a. Allen Neiling – Closure Director, Magnox**

##### Safety and Compliance

3684 Allen Neiling reported that a diver had torn his suit, resulting in skin contact with the pond water. The diver had been extracted from the water and put under surveillance in 90 seconds, and the diver had not been subjected to a significant dose.

There had been no significant environmental events or injuries since the last meeting.

##### Projects Update

3685 A number of early demolition packages of work – offshore structures clearance, CW crane, reservoirs, CO<sub>2</sub> plant, and the administration, engineering, water plant and tertiary feed buildings – were nearing completion.

3686 Concerning the offshore structures work, the crane system had been moved and dismantled. The reservoirs had been redundant for some time, and had now been broken up and the area repaired.

3687 The eight large tanks acting as a buffer for the CO<sub>2</sub> cooling system used in Sizewell A had been recycled and the CO<sub>2</sub> generation plant had also been removed. The

vacated area could now be used to facilitate the decommissioning of the rest of the facility.

3688 The administration, engineering, water plant and tertiary feed buildings had been demolished. The resulting rubble would remain onsite and later used to backfill depressions created by further demolition projects.

3689 The divers had successfully reduced 35 of the old fuel skips considered ILW. The steel from the skips would be managed as ILW accordingly. The diving campaign was anticipated to finish at the end of the summer. Most of the fixed furniture, most of which would be LLW would be dispositioned to the LLW repository.

#### Asset Care projects

3690 The management of asbestos continued to be a high priority. Cladding on the reactors needed to be maintained and received funding accordingly.

3691 A new fence was being installed around Sizewell A to ensure compliance with safety regulations.

#### Socio-economics

3692 Allen Neiling encouraged prospective applicants to apply for funding. He presented a selection of some projects that had been funded through the scheme.

3693 Allen Neiling introduced Steven Payne as the new Communications Lead for Magnox South East Sites.

#### Questions and Answers

3694 Janet Fendley asked about the diver whose suit had been torn. Allen Neiling stated that the diver's skin had not been broken and although he had received a small tritium dose, this was no different than would be assigned to a normal day's work. The exposure was not hazardous and there were no concerns about the diver's health.

3695 Janet Fendley asked whether the metal from the containers being recycled offsite was contaminated. Allen Neiling said it was not. All of the areas subject to the above demolition projects were clean, although they had been surveyed for assurance purposes.

3696 Janet Fendley asked where the ILW was stored. Allen Neiling said most ILW would be stored on the Bradwell site. The remainder would go to the currently under construction Hinkley Point site, subject to confirmation. Currently, the latter ILW was stored in the reactor building.

3697 The Chair asked whether the diver in question was able to continue working. Allen Neiling stated that the dose had been less than 1 microsievert; it had not been serious and the diver was able to continue.

3698 Bob Hogger asked what materials from other facilities would be used to backfill the depressions. Allen Neiling said this was not yet known.

3699 Joan Girling asked about the timescales for backfilling. Allen Neiling said the demolition of the turbine hall was scheduled to start in 2024.

3700 Joan Girling asked where the graphite core at Sizewell A would be stored. Allen Neiling said it would remain in its current location while its radioactivity reduced. The Chair requested that Jonathan Jenkin cover this question later. She understood that there was work undertaken in response to the NDA question about whether accelerated decommissioning would be valuable, and that the target was to submit the timeline for this in January 2018.

- 3701 Rachel Fulcher requested an update on the kittiwakes. Allen Neiling explained that the offshore structures had been completed after the nesting period had been completed and therefore their normal migration patterns had not been disrupted. The nesting sites remained. Rachel Fulcher asked if the security fencing would be lit. Allen Neiling stated that site lighting would not be changed.
- 3702 Pete Wilkinson observed that the pond walls and floor had been radiated over many years. He asked whether material would be ILW when it was removed. Secondly, he asked if HLW was expected to be found, or already had been found, in the ponds. Allen Neiling said the pond structure would be active after it was drained. However, it would likely be VLLW. One item, likely a thumb-sized sliver of fuel, had been found and was being managed although it was not currently HLW. There was a chance of finding a further small amount. The ONR and Rowland Cook had been notified, as had Euratom. The Chair expressed a desire to have this included in the report in future.
- 3703 The Chair observed the turbine hall was due to be demolished around the time that a new build might be being considered. She asked if there was an opportunity to use the laydown areas for parking, for example. Allen Neiling stated that currently no space was available for such purposes. The areas in question would be used to facilitate the demolition. In the longer term, it was an option for discussion.

**2b. Colin Tait – Sizewell B Site Inspector, Office for Nuclear Regulation (substituting for Rowland Cook)**

Questions and Answers

- 3704 Bill Howard asked for clarification on the final paragraph, starting ‘Secondly, the Government’s policy’, on page four of the Office for Nuclear regulation Quarterly Site Report for Sizewell A. Colin Tait stated that the Government expected the ONR to establish a safeguards regime equivalent to the existent Euratom regime. It was anticipated that a regime meeting international standards would be delivered by 29 March 2019. After this date, the ONR would engage with Euratom as part of a transition to ensure the regime was equivalent to Euratom’s regime.

**ACTION: Dr Dan Poulter to note that there are local concerns about ONR’s capacity to continue with their level of service with reduced resources and wider remit.**

- 3705 Pete Wilkinson recalled a telephone conversation with BEIS on the issue and emphasised the concerns. Most answers from BEIS had been to the effect of a promise to follow-up on the concerns. The Chair observed the issue was one of timing, and that there would be challenges. Colin Tait explained that ONR’s budget had increased year-on-year. The ONR also had a very active recruitment programme and were successfully recruiting inspectors against their plan. Statements on the health of the recruitment programme were published on the ONR’s website.
- 3706 Mike Taylor emphasised that it was crucial that the ONR’s position was not weakened. He understood that there would be another consultation on safeguarding, which he had been told would happen in June.
- ACTION: Review the regulation issue in anticipation of the June consultation meeting, with the possibility of holding a sub-group meeting**
- 3707 Colin Tucker observed that Euratom was not a safety regulator. Their sole function was materials accountancy, ensuring that material from irradiated fuel assemblies did not enter the weapons industry. He added that while it was a commitment

under the NPT, it was of limited value for a country such as the UK which was a country with nuclear weapons.

**2c. Philip Heaton – Sizewell A Inspector, Environment Agency (substituting for Phil Fahey)**

3708 Philip Heaton explained that there was an expectation that Bradwell would reach care and maintenance later in 2018. Sizewell A was approximately 10 years behind in terms of putting sites into care and maintenance. He reported that there was a management plan to accumulate suitable material to backfill the depression in Winfrith. The Environment Agency would be regulating the accumulations of non-radioactive waste. There had not been any significant compliance issues at Sizewell A. The biggest concern was Sizewell A's ability to maintain compliance at Bradwell.

3709 Another issue was, as had been mentioned previously, the asset care projects, and particularly the cladding repairs to prevent water from getting into buildings. Philip Heaton further observed that Berkeley already had a reactor in safe storage. Currently underway was a process of learning from the different Magnox sites.

3710 A meeting would be held in May to discuss the mechanism by which the NDA decided funding for key sites.

Questions and Answers

3711 Joan Girling asked about the timescale over which Sizewell A and its non-nuclear materials would be disassembled. Philip Heaton explained that one of the key new pieces of business that Cavendish Fluor Partnership had brought to the UK was the idea of leaving materials onsite. All site permits in the UK were being varied by Christmas 2018 such that sites would have five years to develop a plan for both radioactive and non-radioactive waste. A safety case would be required demonstrating that inadvertent intrusion in the future would be safe even after the period of control had expired. Furthermore, there were the existing CL:AIRE protocols that covered the reuse of material for covering up voids.

3712 Joan Girling observed that the non-nuclear waste would have to be compliant with lining, for example. She asked if this would involve a planning application or would be part of the decommissioning of Sizewell A. Philip Heaton explained that the Environment Agency was still working with the Government to understand their planning requirements. He was not able to currently answer the question but explained that there would be a further consultation on proportionate regulatory control, examining what requirements would remain after the nuclear site licence had been surrendered. The planning authorities were likely to be the main regulators for sites.

3713 Joan Girling expressed her concern about continued use of burying material, and hoped there would be criteria to decide this. Philip Heaton stated that there would be a waste management plan for the site. He added that it might not be appropriate for the arrangement to include a liner. The infilling of voids was within the remit of the Environment Agency.

3714 The Chair observed that the decision to maintain the material on-site rather than removing them differed from the arrangement that the local community had been presented with.

3715 The Chair asked about a consultation concerning quarries in the area. Russ Rainger explained that Sizewell A had a waste retention programme application. However, he did not think the quarry was included in that.

**ACTION: Issue concerning consultation on quarries to be revisited.**

- 3716 Mike Taylor understood that Dr Thérèse Coffey had implied that there would be changes to soil regulations. He questioned whether the freeing up of regulation would be beneficial to using particular materials. Philip Heaton observed that if the voids were to be filled, an equal number of lorries as would be removing material would be required to add material. Cavendish Fluor Partnership had ensured the option of avoiding all the lorry movements. He was not aware of new soil options, but there were benefits of backfilling as opposed to bringing soil onto the site.
- 3717 Bob Hogger observed that Sizewell B had a dry fuel store with approximately 140 containers left for, in some cases, centuries. He asked how long the waste would continue for. The Chair said this question would be answered by the Sizewell B team later. She observed that according to the Magnox initiative, not all Magnox sites would have to have an ILW store. She understood from the NDA that, due to delays with the GDF, there would be a need for stores at each site. She observed that the changing model resulting in uncertainty for the local community. Philip Heaton observed that it was not yet known what would be passed by Parliament and several options were possible. He recalled that the site permits would be varied. Specifically, they would require each site to submit a site wide environmental safety case and waste management plan within five years.
- 3718 Joan Girling asked about the timings of the waste management plan. Philip Heaton said the plan would start in 2023 and run for approximately 50 years; it would run into the care and maintenance period. Joan Girling asked whether the sites would be held to account for this. Philip Heaton said that it would include certain conditions that the sites would be held to. The Bradwell permit was anticipated to be publicly available from approximately June 2018.

**2d. Jonathan Jenkin – Stakeholder Relations Manager, NDA**

- 3719 Jonathan Jenkin recalled that the business plan for 2018-2021 had been published, as had the most recent newsletter called #Decomm, for which there was a link on the website for anyone wishing to receive it. **ACTION: Jonathan Jenkin to re-circulate the business plan for 2015-2018.**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/495116/NDA-Business-Plan-financial-year-beginning-April-2015-to-financial-year-ending-March-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495116/NDA-Business-Plan-financial-year-beginning-April-2015-to-financial-year-ending-March-2018.pdf)

- 3720 The NDA had hosted Princess Anne at the official opening of Nucleus, the Nuclear and Caithness Archives. Jonathan Jenkin emphasised the importance of Nucleus for the record-keeping of the nuclear industry, the geological disposal industry, and a number of local records of interest.
- 3721 The new commercial director, Kate Ellis, would be a main speaker at the Nuclear Industry Association's Decomm 2018 conference and would head up a new commercial directorate in the NDA.
- 3722 The socio-economic annual report for 2016/17 had been published and would now be published annually.
- 3723 The gender pay gap on the nuclear industry had been published. Although the NDA had fewer than 250 employees, it had published the gender pay gap data regardless. The data revealed that there was a gender pay gap on all parts of the NDA estate ranging from 12% to 40%. This would also continue to be reported on.
- 3724 The Public Accounts Committee had produced a report into the Magnox contract, which had been critical. The NDA accepted the recommendations from the report and would report on them.

- 3725 The inquiry set up by Steve Holliday was still underway. Individuals likely to be criticised in the report of the inquiry would be written to in order to give them a chance to respond to the specific criticisms. It was therefore taking longer than originally planned, and there was no fixed date for publication.
- 3726 A research challenge had been launched, giving applicants the chance to win some funding to develop technologies to help the clean-up mission at Sellafield. The RISER dome had also benefitted from NDA R&D funding. It had been developed by two companies and had been used successfully at Sellafield to detect radiation on the Windscale Pile and would assist the Fukushima clean-up.

#### Questions and Answers

- 3727 Jonathan Jenkin referred to the presentation on the strategy review of Magnox decommissioning he given previously. There were a number of reasons undertaking the review. One of these was that the condition of the buildings in some sites in particular was not degrading at a predictable rate. Although a wholesale change in strategy was not anticipated, a more flexible strategy was. Currently, the target was to submit the change plan to the board in May. Subject to Government and Board approval, the consultation on the paper was hoped to be during the summer. Subject to Government approval on the business case, the NDA would engage with site communities and others on the question of prioritisation. In addition to the physical factors, the socio-economic impact was another factor.
- 3728 Jonathan Jenkin explained that there was now a better understanding that even when the GDF was available and accepting waste consignments, there might still be a need for buffer storage due to the quantity of waste that would need to be transferred to the GDF programme. The Chair accordingly emphasised that if there was new plans about storage, this was a new contract with the community and therefore both safeguards and the assurance to the local community, and the mitigation and recompense, was required as appropriate. Jonathan Jenkin accepted this point, adding that the material in question would still be onsite whether it was in a reactor safe store or interim store. Joan Girling understood that the current national system was characterised by the use of buffer storage.
- 3729 She asked whether the AGRs would be the responsibility of the NDA. Jonathan Jenkin explained that EDF was responsible for them. There was a nuclear liabilities fund, in which EDF would make financial provision to cover its future liabilities and decommissioning costs, which the NDA oversaw. Technically the NDA could be charged with responsibility for clean-up, but this decision had not been taken. If it was taken, there would be a transfer of funds from the nuclear liabilities fund.
- 3730 Joan Girling asked whose responsibility it was if EDF could not fulfil that responsibility. Jonathan Jenkin observed that the Government was the funder of last resort but there were plans in place to ensure financial provision to cover the nuclear liabilities was sufficient. Joan Girling expressed concern about the safeguards securing funding, and believed the Government should examine the issue. She observed there had been a significant increase in the cost of decommissioning of Sizewell A over the previous 10 years, and therefore emphasised these concerns.
- 3731 Mike Taylor agreed with Joan Girling concerning the cost. However, he recalled that Bill Hamilton had admitted that the cost for the new decommissioning contract would increase as had seemed the contract had been undersold in the first place. The Chair asked if there would be an update on the Cavendish Fluor Partnership contract. Jonathan Jenkin hoped an update would be available. Cavendish Fluor

Partnership had introduced innovation and savings but further work was required. He observed that asbestos had been a bigger issue than had been anticipated.

3732 Tom Griffith-Jones asked for information on waste responsibility. Jonathan Jenkin explained that the NDA was responsible for Sizewell A, all of the Magnox sites, Sellafield and Dounreay. EDF was responsible for Sizewell B and the AGR fleet. The new build operators were responsible for the planned work. This applied to all waste.

3733 Tom Griffith-Jones emphasised that the location of the waste was an important issue to the local community. He emphasised that those communities suffering from the lack of clarity in the nuclear industry needed to be reassured. He considered that the cost to the community outweighed its benefit. The Chair observed that many projects were encountering similar difficulties across a variety of industries. Jonathan Jenkin stated that he considered Sellafield a unique case. The NDA did not have a position on new nuclear builds but was supporting Government policy and was advising the new build developers. Furthermore, records management had now improved and he hoped there would be more foresight on the decommissioning planning in the future compared to the Magnox projects.

3734 Trevor Branton observed that it had cost approximately £65 million to build Sizewell A, and had been expected to generate £4 billion over its lifetime. He requested the spend on the project since 2006.

**ACTION: Jonathan Jenkin to provide details of the money spent on Sizewell A since 2006.**

3735 Bill Howard recalled that the sub-group had recently met and had been of the opinion that the stakeholder group had been disappointed by the NDA's performance in relation to the papers not being received quickly. The Chair observed that the minute-taking firm had not provided the minutes. Due to the push for cost savings, the SSG was unable to employ a part-time employee to work on Sizewell A. Tracey Finn was responsible for all sites in southern England. The issue was one repeatedly raised with the NDA.

3736 Joan Girling expressed disappointment at the way the SSG had been treated by the NDA. She observed that the SSG was the only means by which the NDA could gather feedback from the public. She considered that the Group should have the right to employ a minute taker. She therefore requested that the NDA enable the SSG to employ a minute secretary. The Chair added that she believed further administrative support than was being received from Cavendish Fluor Partnership was required.

### **3. SIZEWELL B REPORTS**

#### **3a. Sean Verrall – Engineering Manager, Sizewell B (substituting for Paul Morton)**

##### Safety performance and staffing

3737 Since the previous meeting, there had been no significant injuries to staff. There had also been no nuclear reportable events, or significant or reportable fire, environmental or radiological incidents, despite a refuelling outage.

3738 Currently onsite was 545 staff and around 250 year-round contractors working onsite. This number was stable and there were no plans to change these numbers. EDF also had healthy apprenticeship, technical traineeship and industrial placement programmes. One method by which EDF was tackling gender equality was through the recruitment process; the pool of new apprentices was gender-equal.



### Station Performance

- 3739 Sean Verrall reported that Sizewell B had been operating at full power since the end of the refuelling outage in January. He recalled that Kevin Caton had presented the defect found on a steam generator. A significant amount of inspection and maintenance activities had been conducted during the outage. The operation had been completed safely.
- 3740 Instruments on Turbine 2 had recorded an increase in the use of hydrogen, a gas used for cooling across the power industry and used as such for the generator in Sizewell B. A full shutdown of the unit had been undertaken, and the repairs had been completed.
- 3741 Sean Verrall recalled that the International Atomic Energy Agency had visited Sizewell B in 2015 and the report had been published by the Government. It had visited again in April 2017 to check the progress made on its previous recommendations and had published the report for that. The follow-up visit by the OSaRT had been positive.
- 3742 Sean Verrall presented the list of projects sponsored by the Sizewell B fund, observing that over 50% of the funds were still available, and was therefore still open to applications.

### Questions and Answers

- 3743 Bob Hoggar asked how many apprentices were working at Sizewell B or on its training programme. Niki Rousseau stated that there were eight onsite and eight offsite. Sean Verrall added that these apprentices were predominantly local schools and outlying areas. Bob Hoggar questioned whether this would contribute to the technical skills of the area in a large scale. Sean Verrall observed that they were one employer in the area, and considered it positive. Bob Hoggar observed that Sizewell B's budget was significantly larger than those of other employers. He added that Leiston had been strong on engineering skills and would be well-equipped to make wind turbines, and considered it unfortunate that its workers now had to gain nuclear skills. The Chair observed there was funding from EDF and Magnox to create projects that would help local young people to upskill. She observed that there had never been a bid for the large Magnox funding.
- 3744 Sean Verrall explained that in addition to the apprenticeship programme, they had introduced a technical traineeship and there was also a graduate scheme, whose successful applicants rotated between Magnox sites. These talents would not be wasted as those taken on as part of these schemes matched the numbers leaving the company, and the skills were also transferable.
- 3745 Allen Neiling observed that there had been an application as part of the socio-economic programme that was under evaluation.
- 3746 Mike Taylor asked how the corrosion in the plant was monitored, and whether there were concerns about the level of it. Sean Verrell explained that the materials used were very-high quality and so could resist corrosion. Furthermore, a series of tests had been established to enable continued monitoring of them. He further explained that it had always been known that there would be potential for stress corrosion cracking on the weld around the drain line. As a result, there had been checks on the drain line in each outage.
- 3747 Mike Taylor asked whether increasing the fuel burnup rate would affect the level of corrosion. Colin Tucker recalled that the burnup rate dictated the point at which fuel assemblies had to be removed from the reactor. The only change caused by increased burnup was slight changes to the chemistry in the primary circuit. He

added that Sizewell B was one of around 200 commercial PWRs, which shared data on chemistry.

**ACTION: Photographs, and potential further slides from the presentation, to be circulated via post.**

**3b. Colin Tait – Site Inspector, Office for Nuclear Regulation**

3748 Colin Tait reported that the ONR published quarterly reports via its website on its activities at Sizewell B. The regulation of refuelling outage 15 had been the main focus and the recipient of a significant amount of resource. No compliance gaps had been identified, although a number of areas of improvement had been. These improvements had either been resolved prior to restart of the reactor or else action plans had been identified and then monitored by the inspectors who had raised the original issues.

3749 Concerning the steam generator delta leakage, EDF had notified the ONR of the discovery of boron crystals. The ONR had then inspected EDF's repair strategy the safety case for the return to service of the reactor and were satisfied with the findings, and formally issued consent to restart the reactor on 26 January.

3750 Since the refuelling outage, three systems-based inspections had been undertaken: liquid and gaseous radioactive waste facilities, the control rod monitoring and drive system, and the containment cooling and hydrogen management systems. All three were given 'green' inspection ratings.

Questions and Answers

3751 Pete Wilkinson observed that the language of the report seemed to suggest a feeling of adequacy as opposed to strong endorsement. Colin Tait explained that the ONR used specific regulatory language. While they were not legally empowered to assess anything beyond adequacy, this adequacy was in fact in relation to the high standards required by the law. He emphasised that RAG ratings were used for inspections, and he would not give something a 'green' rating if he was unsatisfied; he would rate it as 'amber' and include his reasoning.

**ACTION: Colin Tait to review the language of the ONR's report to ensure it was conveying the correct impression.**

**ACTION: Colin Tait to provide the secretariat of the SSG with a hyperlink to the reactor's return to service report.**

<http://www.onr.org.uk/pars/2018/sizewell-b-17-013.pdf>

3752 Bill Howard observed that the ONR's report referenced 'routine matters', but did not detail the improvements that it had deemed to be necessary. He further asked what protection was needed for the waste fuel store, and about emissions from them. Colin Tait explained that the inspections had been concerned with the ways the workers in the waste store were protected against emissions. The inspection had considered the protections legally compliant. Colin Tucker stated that the figures were so low as to be barely measurable.

3753 The Chair understood there had been difficulties with Inutech cast containers, and that this was the same design as used in Sizewell B. Colin Tucker stated that the containers used at Sizewell B were a different design to the one that was experiencing issues.

3754 Mike Taylor asked if the SSG would like to raise their concerns about the ONR having a workforce sufficient to carry out all of its duties. Colin Tait agreed on the importance of having a well-resourced regulator. However, he considered it

important to distinguish between the work carried out by the safety inspectors and the work carried out by the safeguard inspectors. Therefore, the resource was not transferable between the two groups. Reports on the recruitment programme were published on the website. The Chair observed that the concerns of members on the focus of the consultation process on siting and neglecting technical design and operational safety had been raised.

### **3c. Victoria Thomas – Sizewell B Inspector, Environment Agency**

3755 Victoria Thomas stated that the report to the SSG for December-March had been submitted. Two inspections had been undertaken. The first inspection had been part of a national themed inspection, and thus had been undertaken at different locations across the UK. Recommendations that had been reported back to the core team had been published as a national report.

3756 Environmental management and leadership at Sizewell B had also been assessed, and Victoria Thomas would report back once her findings could be finalised. Initial impressions had been positive; the station was committed to environmental protection and was addressing recommendations on environmental awareness refresher training.

3757 Victoria Thomas said that Sizewell B had been given a minor non-compliance score of 'CCS4' for a minor error on a discharge return, meaning that there was a minor permit breach but no impact on the environment. As part of the Environment Agency's regulation, this was being monitored.

#### Questions and Answers

3758 The Chair asked about the minor error on the discharge return. Victoria Thomas stated that Sizewell B had overstated the discharge due to a transcription error after transferring data between different spreadsheets. The station now had a project underway which would include the automatic transfer of data between databases to eliminate human error. She added that the station had self-reported the error.

### **4. Matters arising from minutes and action tracker**

a. Minutes of the last main meeting held on 14 December 2017

Colin Tait observed that the word 'defensive' ought to be replaced with 'definitive' in paragraph 3636.

b. Other matters arising from minutes and action tracker or correspondence received.

There was none.

c. Sub group meeting held 10 April 2018 .

i. *GDF consultation.*

ii. *SSG constitution review.*

3759 The Chair recalled that the consultation had been concerned with how the NDA and RWM as the deliverers of the GDF would work with communities. The members had sight of the SSG's response.

3760 Tom Griffith-Jones understood that the consultation would be in two parts, and asked if both had been considered. The Chair responded that only 'working with communities' had been discussed. Tom Griffith-Jones observed that the NPS was an important document in that it considered how the planners would look at any

intended disposal facility. The Chair observed that the remit of the SSG had been working with communities, and so had decided to focus on this topic. She added that she hoped the Councils had submitted a response on planning.

**ACTION: The Chair to ask Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Leiston Town Council if they submitted a response concerning the NPS consultation.**

- 3761 Pete Wilkinson expressed concern about the assumption that the disposal would go ahead. He stated that the Environment Agency described it as a safe option, although the RWM were uncertain about technical and scientific aspects. He emphasised that it had to be proven to be safe to the satisfaction of the communities. The Finnish courts had not granted permission for copper cladding to enclose its nuclear fuel, which was the same as planned in the UK. He stated that he considered the assumption that it would progress as premature, and the safety yet to be resolved.
- 3762 Mike Taylor stated that Dr Carolyn Barnes had confirmed to him that there had been a response made by, he assumed, the Joint Local Authority Group. He added that there was a debate about new build spent fuel. The Chair understood that there might need to be a second GDF when the materials would be available. Marjorie Barnes explained that consultation with Sizewell C was underway. She encouraged the members to engage with the project about waste management as part of this.
- 3763 Tom Griffith Jones recalled attending the NGO meeting with BEIS over the GDF consultation. That the timeline for the spent fuel from the new nuclear power station might be different from that of the legacy waste had not been known to BEIS. The documentation did reference this, and he hoped that this issue would be raised.
- 3764 Tom Griffith Jones stated that, concerning the 'working with communities' section, he considered the method was a form of bribery, which he did not consider was the appropriate method. He stated that he felt the SSG should be objecting to this methodology. This sentiment had been echoed by some NGOs in the NGO group, who had considered it immoral.
- 3765 Trevor Branton observed that Section A.2 suggested that members felt the opportunities of a GDF needed to be identified. He stated that some areas of the country were interested in the benefits to the community in return, and many were keen on hosting a GDF. The Chair observed that the subject was difficult, due to the timescale. She understood that GDF had been one of the CoRWM Report's recommendations. Trevor Branton considered that the opportunities needed to be identified. The Chair observed that the Government had declared in the Energy Act 2004 that no new builds would be pursued until a mechanism for waste disposal had been agreed.
- 3766 Joan Girling recalled that the Flowers Report in 1976 had stated that no new power stations should be built until an acceptable waste disposal system was found. The CoRWM Report in 2006 had made a similar finding, but there had not seemed to be much progress. She was concerned that stores would not be secure, or able to be monitored and managed. She further expressed concern about the contents of the storage system. The Chair observed that there was still much that was unknown.
- ACTION: The Chair to communicate the reiteration of the concerns about design and safety monitoring.**
- 3767 Tom Griffith-Jones observed that the NPS was effectively setting the framework for decision-making. Furthermore, the documentation stated that the intention was to

bury the waste and for it to be non-retrievable. Colin Tucker explained that it was easier to design a container that was non-retrievable.

*iii. Constitution review*

3768 The Chair explained that according to the NDA review, there were no significant changes to be made Sizewell A & B SSG, whose membership had been found to be inclusive and wide-ranging. They had adopted the guidance by the NDA.

3769 However, concerning Section 7 on the responsibilities of the Secretariat on Page 6 of the report, the Welsh would not be requested but the SSG would continue to press for support to make sure the secretariat fulfilled its responsibilities to its members to update them and provide them with the necessary information.

## 6. Chairman's Report

The Chair reported that she had toured both Sizewell sites. She thanked Paul, Niki, Allen and Brenda and their staff. She had also attended the meeting in February with BEIS and NDA with regard to proposals to change care and maintenance. She had spoken with Stephen Holliday and the chairs had, in closed session, provided feedback to the inspector on the Magnox sites. Lastly, she apologised for the difficulties with the minutes of the previous meeting.

## 7. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked the attendees. The location and dates of meetings beyond July would need to be confirmed. She requested suggestions on venue for the December meeting.

**Next Meeting is Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July at Saxmundham Market Hall.**

### Glossary:

AGR	Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor
CL:AIRE	Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments
CoRWM	Committee on Radioactive Waste Management
GDF	Geological Disposal Facility
HLW	High Level Waste
ILW	Intermediate Level Waste
LLW	Low Level Waste
NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
NPS	Nuclear Power Service
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
ONR	Office for Nuclear Regulation
OSaRT	Operational Safety Review Team
PWR	Pressurised Water Reactor
RWM	Radioactive Waste Management
VLLW	Very Low Level Waste