

NDA Monthly Update

February 2018

Summary

- Government launches consultation on geological disposal
- Top accolades for nuclear archive
- Cyber classroom opens in Cumbria
- NDA Business Plan consultation closes
- Wylfa 50% fuel removed
- Stakeholders share thoughts on NDA
- Nuclear skills matching service launched
- Waste silo gets ready for emptying
- NDA launches digital newsletter
- Demolition of Sellafield's tallest chimney
- Trapped fuel removed from Dounreay reactor
- Update on Magnox competition inquiry

Diary Dates 2018

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| • National College for Nuclear opens in Cumbria | February 2018 |
| • Department for International Trade Civil Nuclear Showcase 2018, London | 27-28 February 2018 |
| • UK Nuclear Skills Awards, Manchester | 15 March |
| • NDA Business Plan published | End of March 2018 |
| • LLWR Annual Customer Forum, Penrith | April 2018 |

Government consults on geological disposal

The government has launched two new consultations which focus on finding a safe, long-term solution for the permanent disposal of radioactive waste. The first consultation, *Working with Communities*, sets out how the project developer will engage and seek the views of people in areas that may be interested in hosting a disposal facility; the second consultation, on the proposed *National Policy Statement*, will create a rigorous planning process. Geological disposal facilities are already being developed in Finland, Sweden, France, and Canada.

[Weblink: Local communities to give views on permanent disposal of radioactive waste](#)

Top accolade for nuclear record-keeping

The meticulous approach to managing historical records at the NDA's nuclear archive has secured the highest accolade from the government's records regulator. 'Place of Deposit' status was granted by The National Archives at Kew (TNA) and National Records of Scotland in December, after a comprehensive assessment. Nucleus (The Nuclear and Caithness Archives), near Wick, is one of the largest repositories outside London to be accredited by TNA. The news comes just weeks after its sleek, angular lines impressed judges in the annual Architects' Journal awards, collecting two of top trophies for design. A four-year programme is now under way to transfer tens of thousands records from NDA's sites across the UK.

[Weblink: Triple celebration for archive](#)

Securing a future army of cyber experts

The next generation of cyber security professionals are set to benefit from the first Cyber Lab classroom, co-funded by the NDA. The facility, based at Energus near Workington, Cumbria, has been specially designed to train cyber experts. Nine apprentices, who started training last September, will use the classroom and a second cohort will start later this year. The facility was funded through the NDA's Cyber Security and Resilience Project as part of a programme to develop skills for the NDA estate and its businesses.

[Weblink: New lab for cyber trainees](#)

Consultation to close on Business Plan

The NDA's consultation on its 2018-2021 Business Plan is due to close by 4 February. Draft annual plan details the NDA's decommissioning priorities for the next three years and also takes a longer-term high-level overview of the 20-year programme. Feedback was sought from members of the public, nuclear regulators, employees at Site Licence Companies, trade unions, local authorities, Site Stakeholder Groups, Non-Governmental Organisations and any other organisation with an interest in the NDA's mission.

[Weblink: Business Plan consultation](#)

Wylfa is half-way there with fuel removal

Fuel removal at Wylfa on Anglesey has now reached the half-way stag. During its 45-year lifetime as a power station generating electricity for the UK, Wylfa's two reactors used almost 100,000 fuel elements. Since generating in 2015, the site's main focus has been to empty both reactors and send all the remaining used fuel to Sellafield for reprocessing. Completion of defuelling will mark the end of one of the UK's largest programmes of nuclear and hazard reduction work.

[Weblink: Fuel removal at Wylfa](#)

Do they think we're performing well?

The NDA has carried out an independent survey to establish how stakeholders view the organisation and its performance in cleaning up its 17 sites. Understanding people's views helps clarify areas of success and where improvements can be made. So this independent study gives us a clear benchmark to enable us to work better. The groups surveyed ranged from government ministers to local community leaders, national journalists, regulators and the workforce.

[Weblink: How people view us](#)

Skills matching service launched

A new online skills-matching service, the Nuclear Gateway, puts job candidates in direct contact with a pool of prospective employers. The platform, a collaboration between the National Skills Academy Nuclear (NSAN), the Nuclear Skills Strategy Group (NSSG) and the NDA, works both for companies and would-be employees. It enables employers to search a pool of potential recruits and those over-subscribed with applications to recommend candidates for other openings with different employers. For job-seekers, it provides openings with a range of prospective employers.

[Weblink: Nuclear Gateway](#)

Waste storage silo gets ready for emptying

Experts at Sellafield have cut the sixth and final hole in the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo (PFCS), a locked waste storage vault that was never designed to be opened. The holes will allow radioactive waste to be removed from one of the site's oldest and most hazardous buildings. Six giant steel doors now provide a safe barrier between the outside world and the waste inside the silo, until it starts to be removed over the coming years by a 'grabbing' machine.

[Weblink: Last hole cut in Pile Fuel Cladding Silo](#)

NDA launches new digital newsletter

The NDA has launched an online newsletter to keep stakeholders up to date with developments. The first edition of **#Decomm** was published in November and issued to all those who already subscribe to the NDA's e-bulletin. Anyone interested in receiving the newsletter can sign up via the website.

[Weblink: Find out more about #Decomm](#)

Sellafield's tallest chimney on its way down

A 60-year-old chimney on top of Sellafield's First Generation Reprocessing Plant is being painstakingly taken down by hand at a rate of one metre a week. At 61 metres high, sitting on top of the 61-metre building, it was the tallest structure on site until a moern replacement was built. Conventional demolition techniques like explosives and cranes cannot be used in such a crowded, hazardous environment, so a self-climbing platform has been designed and installed, where workers will remove each piece of concrete and steel by hand.

[Weblink: Decommissioning reaches new heights](#)

Free at last as jammed fuel is removed

Work is now under way to retrieve the remaining radioactive fuel elements that have been stuck for decades inside the Dounreay Fast Reactor. When the dome-shaped experimental reactor closed in 1977, most of the core fuel was removed. But follow-up work came to a halt when some of the metallic 'breeder' elements in the zone surrounding the core were found to be swollen and jammed. Almost 1,000 – around two-thirds of the total - were left in place. Now, after many years of work to design and test remotely operated equipment, the elements are being removed.

[Weblink: Breeder fuel removal under way](#)

Update on inquiry into Magnox competition

The [National Audit Office](#) has published a report on the NDA's award of the Magnox contract in 2014, while the Holliday inquiry has also published its interim findings on the procurement process for management of the 12 sites. The full Holliday report is expected in the New Year. Meanwhile, the NDA is terminating, by mutual agreement, the Magnox PBO contract with the Cavendish Fluor Partnership (CFP) in 2019.

[Weblink: The Holliday Inquiry](#)