

# NDA Monthly Update

## January 2018

### Summary

- Views invited on NDA Business Plan
- 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
- Specialist equipment dries out waste at Dungeness
- Busiest year yet at supply chain event
- Research competition shortlists innovative ideas

### Diary Dates 2018

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|--|---------------------|
| • Consultation on draft NDA Business Plan closes                         | 4 February 2018     |
| • National College for Nuclear opens in Cumbria                          | February 2018       |
| • Department for International Trade Civil Nuclear Showcase 2018, London | 27-28 February 2018 |
| • NDA Business Plan published  | End of March 2018   |

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### Views welcome on our latest Business Plan

The NDA is seeking views on its 2018-2021 Business Plan by 4 February. A consultation was launched in December on the annual plan, which 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 is 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](#)

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### 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

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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](#)

### Drying system to tackle Dungeness waste

Specialist equipment is being installed at Dungeness A in to dry out radioactive waste, halving its volume and making it ready for long-term storage. As much as 99 per cent of moisture is removed from intermediate level waste (ILW) through the Advanced Vacuum Drying System (AVDS), reducing volume and cutting the cost of storing the material. AVDS was first used at the Berkeley site in 2013 to tackle radioactive sludge, resin and other waste generated while the site was producing electricity and in the early stages of decommissioning. It proved such a success that it was next dispatched to Bradwell where it was put to work helping to manage the site's radioactive waste inventory.

[Weblink: Cutting-edge kit set for dry run](#)

### Busiest year ever at supply chain event

A record turn-out of 1,600 visitors ensured success for the NDA Estate Supply Chain Event 2017. The visitors, from all across the UK and overseas, enjoyed a day of exhibitions and networking at the annual event in Manchester, now in its seventh year. Organised jointly by the NDA and its business units with the aim of increasing visibility of opportunities for suppliers, a highlight of the day was the awards ceremony.

[Weblink: Supply chain event success](#)

### Research competition shortlists innovative ideas

Fifteen ideas were shortlisted in a £multi-million competition to find new technologies for cleaning up Sellafield hazards. The shortlisted entries, many from companies new to nuclear, are drawing up feasibility studies and the most promising ideas will be selected to move onto the next stage. The competition, run by the NDA and the government's Innovate UK, awarded an initial £750,000 to 15 newly formed consortia to help them develop ideas on dismantling a large number of highly radioactive 'cells' at Sellafield's two reprocessing plants which are set to close by 2020. The remaining funds will support the next stage, when prototypes will be developed for testing.

[Weblink: Innovation ideas shortlisted](#)