

UK CARL Conference      October 2009

Attended by Anne Chard for DSG and June Love for DSRL

### **Summary**

CARL is an independent, self-supporting consortium of organisations from countries that have experience with stakeholder involvement in radioactive waste management. The October workshop was organised under the framework of the CARL project. The aim of the workshop was to enable stakeholders, especially those from local UK communities who are involved in radioactive waste management, to meet their counterparts from other countries.

The project unites four types of partners working in Belgium, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK:

- Citizen stakeholders
- Agencies responsible for radioactive waste management
- Research organisations for social science
- Licencing and regulatory authorities
- Representatives working in these thematic areas in other countries also attended; at this workshop representatives were present from Spain, Switzerland, Canada, France and Finland.

The aims of the conference were to:

- Provide an update of where international programmes are currently from a stakeholder perspective
- Discuss the regeneration and development opportunities that have taken place in association with long term radioactive waste management facilities
- Discuss how technical issues can be made more open and accessible to local stakeholders to support their decision making
- Discuss opportunities for developing an international programme to promote local stakeholder interactions

The conference involved a mixture of presentations, plenary panel sessions and discussion groups.

Day 1 consisted of presentations from the UK, Belgium, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, Canada, Slovenia and France in the morning. These presentations gave an update on the progress achieved by each country in the area of stakeholder participation. After the

presentations a panel discussion and question/answer session was held. Points of commonality and difference were discussed. In the afternoon there was further presentations from the UK, Switzerland, Spain and Sweden on regeneration and development opportunities. Delegates were then split into facilitated discussion groups to explore the key challenges to creating development opportunities in more detail. The key points from these discussion groups were then fed back to the wider audience in a plenary session.

Day 2 began with presentations from Canada, Belgium, France and the former CARL project coordinator Dr Anne Bergmans. These presentations were on the theme of opening up the technical issues to a wider stakeholder audience. A panel discussion followed on what methods were working and how future challenges could be addressed. The final session involved summary presentations from the NDA followed by facilitated group discussions on how the CARL process could continue to sustain international collaboration that promoted local stakeholder interactions.

As a personal view on the value of this conference and the CARL project as a whole, I would say that the CARL process has contributed to my understanding of the huge range of possibilities for stakeholder input in the various decision making processes. Continued collaboration has allowed me to see what similar or different problems are faced by other stakeholder groups like the DSG in these countries and how they have tackled the challenges. This in turn was of great value when working in the Community Benefit sub-group of the DSG and considering the options available in relation to the proposed Dounreay Low Level Waste disposal facility.