

# NDA Monthly Update

September 2011

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## Summary

- Options for moving material from Harwell published
- Options for moving material from Dounreay published
- New online format tracks performance of sites and NDA
- Sellafield MOX Plant set to close
- Sellafield Performance Plan completed
- NDA's annual report and accounts published
- Acceleration goal for geological disposal facility (GDF)
- GDF will create hundreds of jobs
- Oldbury reactors reach double milestone

## Diary Dates

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|---|-----------------|
| • Opening of Coleg Menai Energy & Skills Centre | Early November  |
| • National stakeholder event, Manchester        | 23-24 November  |
| • Announcement on Preferred Bidder for Dounreay | End of November |

### Options for moving material from Harwell

The NDA has published options associated with the management of exotic fuels, nuclear materials and wastes at Harwell. After considering all relevant factors, the paper demonstrates that there is a strategic and economic case for Dragon fuel, low-enriched uranium (LEU), contact-handled intermediate level waste drums and concrete-lined drums to be managed at Sellafield instead of the current Harwell location. The NDA has been engaging with stakeholders and local communities to gain their views on the proposed strategy for the management of these materials. It is anticipated that a decision will be made by the end of the year. If the Sellafield management option becomes the approved strategy, transportation will start in 2013. The deadline for comments is the end of September.

[Weblink: Credible and Preferred Options Paper](#)

### Options for moving material from Dounreay

The NDA has also published options associated with the management of DFR breeder material currently stored at Dounreay. The paper discusses the relevant factors and concludes that there is a clear and compelling strategic case for the material to be managed alongside spent Magnox fuel at Sellafield, the reference strategy for which is reprocessing. This would represent a change from the existing strategy of immobilisation at Dounreay. Again, the NDA has been engaging with stakeholders on the proposed strategy and it is anticipated that a decision will be reached by the end of the year. If the strategy selected is for the management of DFR breeder material at Sellafield, transportation could start in 2012.

[Weblink: Credible and Preferred Options Paper](#)

### Keeping track of progress

The NDA has launched a revised format for the online recording of sites' progress towards their decommissioning targets. Targets detailed in the recently published Business Plan 2011-2014 will be used to measure progress with a simple traffic light system of green (on target), amber (behind target with some possibility of recovery) and red (behind target). Web users will be able to check the performance of individual sites against specific targets, or browse by key themes. The new format reflects a stronger focus on delivery and will be updated on a quarterly basis, replacing the previous system which reported progress using more general indicators. As well as the sites, progress will be reported for the NDA and its Radioactive Waste Management Directorate (RWMD).

[Weblink: Our progress](#)

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### Future of Sellafield MOX plant

The Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP), which recycles foreign-owned plutonium into nuclear fuel, is being closed as a result of the NDA's re-assessment of commercial risk following the Japanese earthquake and tsunami. Working with Japanese customers, the NDA has been reviewing the Plant's future, assessing its likely effect on the SMP programme and associated commercial arrangements. The NDA Board concluded that the only reasonable course of action was to close SMP to ensure that the UK taxpayer does not carry a future financial burden from SMP. The NDA will continue to store Japanese plutonium safely and securely under international safeguards and further develop discussions on a responsible approach to support the Japanese Utilities' policy for re-using their material. Meanwhile, the Government has been consulting on policy options for dealing with the UK's Plutonium stockpile, including possible re-use as MOX fuel.

[Weblink: NDA statement](#)

### Sellafield Performance Plan published

The NDA together with Sellafield Ltd and Nuclear Management Partners (NMP) have published a new Performance Plan for the site. The Plan follows two years of investigation and analysis and sets out the future operations, construction projects and decommissioning activities over the lifetime of the site, but with a particular focus through to 2025. NDA Chief Executive Tony Fountain said: "I believe that for the first time we now have a credible plan that is underpinned both technically and in terms of capability, that gives us all the best chance of success."

[Weblink: Details on the Sellafield Ltd website](#)

### A year of progress

The NDA published its Annual Report & Accounts for 2010/11, outlining considerable progress in its mission to decommission and clean up the UK's civil public sector nuclear legacy. In addition to the main document, a special edition of Insight was published summarising some of the year's key achievements. Chief Executive Tony Fountain said: "It's been a year of good performance, hitting targets that show concrete progress against our tasks. But it has also been a year in which critical steps have been taken to allow us to focus on delivery over the years ahead – including securing the availability of resources through the Spending Review, a rebuilt Sellafield performance Plan, a new approach to Magnox delivery and our own more focused organisation."

[Weblink: Annual Report and Accounts 2010/2011](#)

### Geological disposal acceleration goal

The NDA has welcomed a new Government report that outlines an ambition to see the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) accept its first waste by 2029, around 10 years ahead

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of the current indicative timeline. Published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change, the Implementing Geological Disposal Annual Report explains the background to the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) programme as well as actions and updates since the publication of the 2008 White Paper.

Bruce McKirdy, Managing Director of the NDA's Radioactive Waste Management Directorate (RWMD) that has responsibility for design and implementation of the facility, said all options to accelerate the programme would be explored. DECC also published a consultation document on how potential sites for the GDF would be identified and assessed. The Government, which is leading on selection of a suitable site, is committed to a process based on seeking a volunteer community to host the facility and has received three 'expressions of interest' for two areas in west Cumbria.

[Weblink: Implementing Geological Disposal Annual Report](#)

### Underground facility would sustain hundreds of jobs

An average of 500 jobs would be created over the 140-year lifespan of the underground facility built (Geological Disposal Facility or GDF) for the disposal of UK's higher activity radioactive waste, according to a new NDA study. The highest levels of employment would be during the construction and early operations of the £12 billion project, when workforce numbers would reach more than 1,000. The numbers revealed in the study were produced using benchmarking against similar programmes around the world, including Sweden and Finland; through analysing typical underground construction activities such as sinking shafts and tunnelling and using references from the construction industry.

Weblink: [Full Manpower and Skills report](#)

### One reactor shuts down, one extends generating life

One of the reactors at Oldbury Power Station, near Bristol, has been given permission to continue generating until the end of 2012, while the second has shut down after reaching the end of its operational life. Oldbury was originally scheduled to close at the end of 2008, and has successfully extended its operating life on two occasions. It now has the opportunity to continue producing electricity for a further final period, following a review with the site's regulators.

[Weblink: Oldbury reactor continues generating](#)