

Secretary
Dounreay Stakeholder Group
Thurso
Caithness
Ref: my comments to DSRL made via Stake Holders Meeting

For the Attention of the Secretary -June Love

Re: Response to the Reply sent to Mr R Stuart from DSG Dated 25th June 2013-09-25

I was hoping to attend the next meeting of the Stakeholder Group tonight but unfortunately I have been required to attend to urgent family business further South and therefore cannot attend. I wish therefore to make a few comments regarding my original questions put to the DSRL and the subsequent meeting I had with DSRL - Alastair MacDonald.

Firstly I would like to thank DSRL for the prompt reply to my questions, this is probably the first detailed response I have had to many letters I have written to others regarding the issues relating to Dounreay particularly those sent to the NDA before the Dounreay management contract was let, with only receiving responses when I phoned them to insist on a reply.

A follow up meeting was held with DSRL but unfortunately the meeting was cut short due to the understandable attendance at a funeral of a past colleague who had worked at Dounreay for many years. The main points which I got from the meeting were briefly as follows:

- With respect to senior management at Dounreay moving up to Caithness, he acknowledged that many had not made the move because of the family disruption that this would cause. This was particularly the case as the contracts let were so short and the future of further work in the far north being uncertain. This comment was further endorsed at the last DSG meeting by the NDA who stated the difficulties that they were having getting a programme manager to move up to the area with his family. I think the words used were that additional incentives might have to be used to encourage someone to move to the Caithness. This, to my mind, underlines the difficulties that professional services have in the North in getting suitably qualified medical staff and teachers to move up into the area.
- Some discussion took place on what the site is doing to develop business in Caithness, DSRL sited that they have put money into organisations like the chamber of commerce, and assistance to the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership but are otherwise not actively engaged with companies in the area to assist them directly, as that is being done directly by HIE. I reflect on a comment, made by a member of the public, that Babcock with all their experience and expertise could offer this direct to businesses in the area particularly those with manufacturing skills. One suggestion here would be for DSRL to visit every company in Caithness to assess their potential skills for not only for work at Dounreay but other sites across the UK and overseas. This hopefully would provide the basis for increase manufacturing employment in the area.

- Some discussion took place on the training of young people of all educational abilities. DSRL admitted that whilst they do support employment of graduates from the Universities and offering some craft training to apprentices on the site, the numbers are small
- There is no intention for DSRL to mark the 20th anniversary of the shutdown of PFR in 2014.

Finally whilst DSRL would like to do much more in the community they are limited by what they can achieve within the terms of their contact with the NDA. It is my opinion that the NDA have underestimated the social impact of what the rundown of Dounreay has on the future wellbeing of Caithness and the surrounding areas. There appears to be very little in their contract that might encourage them to achieve a healthy vibrant economy as the run down progresses. It is my view that despite the glossy image displayed by the press on Wind Farm construction (so called green energy!) and the development of tidal energy, much of the technical and manufacturing input is from elsewhere further South with Caithness just becoming a warehouse for storage of components for erection by others. Even a recent press report highlights how the French are pushing to build wind turbine components in France, this is yet another good manufacturing opportunity for Caithness that will be missed.

Roger Stuart