

The views in this report are from the individual concerned and may not reflect the consensus view of the DSG.

DSG(2015)C021

**Report of meetings with Direct Rail Services in Inverness (24 & 25 February 2015) , Visit to International Nuclear Services Vessel “Oceanic Pintail” at Barrow-in-Furness (4 March 2015) and meeting with Bill Hamilton (Head of Stakeholder Relations : NDA) :**

**Report by Dounreay Stakeholder Group Member Tor Justad**

*Meeting with Direct Rail Services : 24 and 25 February 2015-  
with members of the Caithness Transport Forum*

This took place on 25 February 2015 in Inverness and included a briefing from Chris Connelly ((Commercial & Business Development Director) and from Barry Earl (Intermodal Business Manager)

Also present were Beverley Stothart (Head of Commercial & Business Development) and Kyle Palmer (Communications & Marketing Manager)

On the evening of 24 February there was an informal drinks reception and dinner with DRS Staff and guests representing various stakeholders

The briefing by Chris Connelly (Commercial & Business Development Director) covered the structure of DRS which was formed in 1995 as a wholly-owned subsidiary of NDA accountable top the Department for Energy & Climate Change, with the majority of their business being the carrying of nuclear materials, but also resource hire, third party maintenance, infrastructure support and consultancy and training

There are 170 DRS train crew across the UK with a fleet of over 100 engines and 3 maintenance Facilities including Motherwell, with 15,000 trains pa covering over 3 M miles

DRS is regulated by ORR : Office of Rail Regulation and subject to Freedom of Information legislation and is compliant with a number of management systems such as ISO 9001 International Certifications

We were informed about the DRS Strategic Plan and plans for growth including FMCG (Fast-moving Consumer Goods) for all major supermarkets, which reduces CO2 emissions considerably with 4 main intermodal routes

Beverley Stothart (Head of Commercial & Business Development) informed us about the Stages from Sales Enquiry, Sales Evaluation and Service Delivery involved in any contract

However, DRS are keen to gain non-nuclear other business and the Intermodal service provide for TESCO containers to the Inverness Depot (with medium density fibreboard from Norbord returned) is an example. This contract is handled in Inverness by Russell Logistics and we were given a demonstration of the way in which containers are lifted off the DRS rail wagons and on to Russell Logistics lorries for further distribution.

The speed and efficiency of this operation was very impressive despite the train being 3 hours late in arriving through delays on the line – no fault of DRS !

We were also invited to look in the cab and engine compartment of the Class 66 Engine that towed the containers that we watched being unloaded after its 118 mile journey from the Mossend depot which takes 3 hours and 45 minutes

There was detail provided about the facility at Georgemas Junction which is an Open Access Terminal – so open to all Freight Operating Companies provided it can fit with current rail movements - which was not known to the author of this report

We were informed of early stage discussions with Company X for a daily / weekly contracted intermodal freight train, with indications that there would be volume for a dedicated 2/3 times a week train

A dedicated freight service opens the door for companies with smaller volumes to buy space on a train on an ad hoc basis for a one off container price, with some companies already identified including Stobart (Tesco) and ASDA

However, it was made clear that no service would commence unless it had a long term future

DRS is also working as a partner to one of the three companies who are competing for the contract to complete the movement of documents from nuclear sites to Wick to form the National Nuclear Archive, with first movements starting in late 2016

We were informed that discussions had been held with the Co-operative Group and other freight opportunities included whisky, fish products, biomass, gas, metal / wood, construction materials, support of renewables, and Dounreay site construction

Paths have to be available from Network Rail and DRS are committed to working with Network Rail and the Caithness Transport Forum so that intermodal freight “can thrive” in the far north of Scotland

DRS has a staff of around 400 with depots from Georgemas Junction in the north and in most parts of the UK with a rail network

One improvement which would make the instruction of additional traffic on the North Line more feasible is the addition of more loops and lengthening of existing loops. This is under discussion with Network Rail and the Scottish Government

We were provided with 2 PowerPoint presentations on a memory stick and these can be made available to June Love for further distribution

The summary of the briefings was that DRS is :

- i) Active in the Intermodal market
- ii) Pursuing genuine enquiries for Georgemas
- iii) Keen to engage with local stakeholders

***Visit to INS vessel “Oceanic Pintail” on Wednesday 4 March 2015 : Barrow-in-Furness (with DSG member David Broughton)***

This visit was arranged through Anna MacConnell (DNA) and involved overnight stays in Whitehaven and then a drive with Anna from Whitehaven to Barrow-in-Furness where we were able to park adjacent to “Oceanic Pintail” without any security checks

On arrival we were met by Ben Todd (Communications Manager : INS) and Deborah Ward (NDA Corporate Communications Manager & Editor of Insight) and then by the Captain of “Oceanic Pintail”, Captain Richard Walby

After a safety briefing and checking of ID and issuing of a pass we were taken first to the bridge of the ship where we viewed the controls for handling of the ship (including S Band Radar) and control panels which indicate any fires in any part of the ship. It was noticeable that the layout and construction of the ship was from the 1980’s rather than 2015

“Oceanic Pintail” is a 28 year old ship built in Japan with a deadweight tonnage of 3865 tonnes, a length overall of 103.9 m, a breadth of 16.5 m and a draft of 6.047 m. There are 5 holds with a capacity of up to 20 and her design speed is 11 knots

She is owned by NDA and operated by INS on behalf of NDA, crewed by PNTL Ltd. (more on [www.pntl.co.uk](http://www.pntl.co.uk)) and serviced by SERCO under contract to INS

She is an INF3-class vessel - the highest level of the International Maritime Organization’s INF Code which regulates shipments by sea of packaged irradiated nuclear fuel, plutonium and high level radioactive wastes – with a wide range of safety features including a double hull around cargo spaces, twin engines and a comprehensive suite of built-in redundancy to all critical operating systems.

There is always a back-up system ready to be brought into operation. This safety-in-depth approach extends to its crew, who are the most experienced nuclear cargo personnel in the world. All of the senior navigating and engineering officers hold certificates of competence for a higher rank than the one they serve.

There was work being carried out on the ship which included replacement of equipment and enhancing security

The Captain answered a number of questions related to how nuclear fuel casks were loaded and we later viewed in the hold how they were secured

The Captain explained that holds could be flooded to maintain stability if required

Other questions also answered related to the qualifications required by crew which were as required by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency

The number of crew on the ship was greater than equivalent merchant ships so that in the event of illness or other contingency there was always a crew member who could take over the role

The crew wear radiation monitoring equipment at all times and levels recorded are the level expected at any location and some crew have Health Physics training

Any hint of an emergency would result in a “Red Button” reaction and is based on a precautionary principle so that INS HQ and other agencies can be alerted sooner rather than later

As with any ship, pilots are used when required for entering and leaving ports

As security arrangements are confidential there was no discussion of how this was provided on the ship apart from it being provided by the Civil Nuclear Constabulary. More detail is available on the CNC website : [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-nuclear-constabulary](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-nuclear-constabulary)

Tendering is in process for transports to the USA and the necessary planning to undertake the exotics transport has been carried out

On a tour of the ship we were able to see the double skin of the hull structure – described as “a ship within a ship” and we were also shown the engine room with its two engines

Protection is delivered by impact resistant structures between the two hulls and the duplication of all essential systems to provide high reliability and accident survivability. She also has enhanced buoyancy and additional fire fighting equipment, including a hold flooding system and spare electrical generators.

Oceanic Pintail (previously Pacific Pintail) underwent extensive refurbishment early in 2012 including modifications to broaden the capability of the vessel to cover a more extensive range of flasks and ISO containers, which meets the requirements of customers.

We were informed that Oceanic Pintail’s design and operation meets all the relevant regulations for nuclear transports by sea.

The ship carries 2 lifeboats and INS has a commercial agreement with a Spitzer tug company which can provide an emergency towing vessel if required in an emergency using a Lloyds Open Agreement

There was some discussion about the Paris / Brussels Convention and the complexity of marine law and insurance liabilities relating to British ships carrying dangerous cargoes

The vessel also has its own towing chains located bow and stern which can be deployed if required

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She also has enhanced buoyancy and additional fire fighting equipment, including a hold flooding system and spare electrical generators. Oceanic Pintail underwent extensive refurbishment early in 2012 including modifications to broaden the capability of the vessel to cover a more extensive range of flasks and ISO containers, further enhancing the vessel's operational flexibility to meet the requirements of our customers.

We were informed that Oceanic Pintail's design and operation meets all the relevant regulations for nuclear transports by sea.

As per IAEA (International Atomic Energy Authority) regulations the vessel is monitored 24/7 by a central operations room provided by INS – more detail on INS at : [www.internationalnuclearservices.com](http://www.internationalnuclearservices.com)

It was disappointing that only 2 DSG Members attended this visit as there is no substitute for seeing the frontline of any service including in this case a ship and its Captain and a representative of INS

***Meeting with DRS at Barrow-in-Furness (Serco offices) : Wednesday 4 March 2015 (with DSG Member David Broughton)***

At this meeting a briefing was provided by Tony Hewitson (Head of Production Planning : DRS) and also attended by Kyle Palmer (Communications & Marketing Manager :DRS) together with Anna, Ben and Deborah

Tony covered the structure of DRS and its role in nuclear transports, including the current nuclear transports from Dounreay to Barrow, using the Georgemas Junction

He also referred to the co-operation between DRS and INS in carrying nuclear materials

Tony agreed to e mail his Powerpoint to June Love for further distribution

***Meeting with Bill Hamilton (Head of Stakeholder Relations : NDA) and Anna at The Hub, Whitehaven : Wednesday 4 March 2015 (with DSG Member David Broughton)***

This meeting was in place of a requested tour of the Sellafield site which was not possible on this day due to an emergency exercise

After making the 7 hour rail journey to Whitehaven it was a pity to pass the Sellafield site without being able to visit as in discussions at the DSG the link with Sellafield forms part of all discussions on transports as it is the actual destination for current rail

movements and the proposed destination of the “exotics” whether transported by rail or sea

I hope that there may be an opportunity for DSG Members to pay a visit to Sellafield in future as the current state of Sellafield is obviously linked to decommissioning at Dounreay

Bill Hamilton was involved on the day of the visit in the breaking news of an increase of £5 billion to £53 billion in February 2015, from £48 billion on 31 March 2014 in the Sellafield budget and an imminent visit by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee

The Chair of the UK Government Public Accounts Committee Margaret Hodge said in relation to this issue ““It has taken far too long for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to deal with management incompetence at Sellafield. My Committee concluded in February 2014 that the Authority had not demonstrated why Nuclear Management Partners’ ownership of Sellafield provides value for money”

However Bill was able to update us on the current position at Sellafield which currently employs about 10,000 people directly and 2000/3000 sub contractors – more detail on : [www.sellafieldsites.com](http://www.sellafieldsites.com)

Clearly the announcement in January 2015 of the termination of the current contract with Nuclear Management Partners (NMP) for decommissioning work at Sellafield has major implications for NDA as new structures are implemented NDA takes on more direct responsibility

Sellafield Limited - the Site Licence Company which operates the site on behalf of the NDA - will now become a subsidiary of the NDA and be led by a team appointed and governed by a newly-constituted board of the site licence company

Questions raised by Tor Justad and David Broughton were answered by Bill Hamilton