

DSG CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017/18

This year sees my first year as DSG Chairman come to an end. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone involved with DSG for their input, commitment and open and honest discussions that have taken place throughout the year.

While it is said every year, DSG is not just about four public meetings per year with sub groups but there is an amazing amount of work that goes on in between meetings to ensure we respond timeously to consultations, we pick up issues and continue to progress these throughout, provide responses to press comments and generally try to get on top of a massive agenda for the local community – from the site's decommissioning activities, to safety and environment, the neighbouring Vulcan site and to the future of the area when the decommissioning is complete. Not only that, but as a DSG we are represented on a number of other local groups which is outlined below.

This year, as like last year, the Dounreay site's priority has been on the fuels projects but it is also pleasing to see that decommissioning progress continues in parallel with this priority. It is obvious from our meetings that while the local area appears to be relatively relaxed with regards the fuel movements, others further afield have voiced their disquiet.

As I reflect over a busy year, I would expect that going forward the focus for DSG will continue to be:

-) The assurance that the site is delivering the decommissioning activities in a safe, secure and environmentally compliant way.
-) Getting to grips with changing regulations which may affect the interim end state of the site.
-) Remaining engaged in the effects of Brexit in relation to Euratom.
-) The staffing profile of the site and the Voluntary Early Redundancies which continues throughout the next financial year.
-) The socio economic benefits within Dounreay contracts and look forward to hearing real tangible benefits coming forward next year.

This year, we have seen a large number of voluntary redundancies in the core workforce and smaller reductions in the contractor workforce. Whilst this was not universally welcome, we recognise the workforce will continue to shrink and evolve as skills mix changes in response to the changing decommissioning programme. In partnership with the CNSRP, we will continue to track and question employment numbers and job replacement in our community.

As DSG also acts as the stakeholder group for the Vulcan (MOD) site we have actively engaged with MOD on the future options for the site. Our disappointment has been voiced on the response that MOD will not consult with the local community and I am sure this will be an ongoing activity into next year as we continue to ask MOD the reasoning behind this – we understand they do not have a statutory remit to consult but we will continue to seek for clarity on why this is not forthcoming.

Our membership continues to evolve and it is pleasing to see there is a will from the organisations to continue their involvement with DSG and to those who have also applied recently.

For this year, we have been involved in:

RESPONDING TO CONSULTATIONS

-) CNSRP review of roles/remit of CNSRP groups.
-) Dounreay Planning phase 3 (2018 to interim end state)
-) Dounreay Socio Economic Plan, 2017/18
-) NDA Draft business Plan, 2018 onwards

SUPPORT TO OTHER PROJECTS

-) Thurso Community Sports Hub
-) Transport topics, in partnership with Caithness Transport Forum
-) Meygen project and Contract for Difference

DSG PRESENTATIONS

-) Dounreay decommissioning update
-) Dounreay Procurement activities
-) Direct Rail Services

EXTERNAL VISITS/MEETINGS

-) Scottish Government Scottish Nuclear Sites Meeting, Edinburgh
-) NDA Stakeholder Summit, Cumbria
-) NDA SSG Chair's Forum, London
-) David Batters, NDA meeting with chair/vice chair, Caithness

DSG REPRESENTATION AT OTHER MEETINGS

-) CNSRP Advisory Board
-) Caithness Transport Forum
-) North Highland Regeneration Fund
-) Caithness & North Sutherland Fund
-) LEADER (Highland)
-) Nucleus Advisory Panel
-) Caithness Community Planning Partnership

As Chairman of DSG, I would like to thank those representatives that are standing down for their involvement and thank the new representatives for volunteering to continue their involvement with DSG.

As the years progress we will see skills leave the site, new skills coming to site, new contracts being put in place as well as a continued pace to deliver the decommissioning mission I believe that DSG will continue to play a very important role within the community.

Roger Saxon

Chairman, DSG

20th February 2018