

13 May 2009

Alastair Macdonald  
Dounreay SSG Chair  
c/o June Love  
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Dear Alastair

Towards the end of last year you were kind enough to make some time available to give us some feedback on the NDA as part of a stakeholder research exercise we commissioned.

The results of the exercise were reported to the Board in February and have informed our thinking in terms of how we take the NDA forward in the next phase of its development.

I enclose a summary of the report we received.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks for your input. If you would like to follow up any aspect of the report, or to discuss your ongoing relations with the NDA at any stage, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

**Stephen Henwood**  
**Chairman**

## NDA STAKEHOLDER AUDIT 2008

### SUMMARY REPORT

January 2009-05-29

### STAKEHOLDER VIEWS – ISSUE OVERVIEW

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This report summarises the views of twenty-five key stakeholders for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) during in-depth interviews from 17<sup>th</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Interviewees represented one of the following groups:

- Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs)
- Trade Unions
- Parliamentarians
- Private sectors (contractors and wider industry)
- Regulators
- Media

Below is a summary of the main points made by stakeholders during the interviews:

1. **Decommissioning process**

- Relief that good progress has been made with contract letting especially at Sellafield.
- Some felt that insufficient attention had been paid to non-Sellafield issues
- Acknowledged tension between public decommissioning role and need where possible to act commercially.

2. **Strategy and funding**

- Strong feeling that the NDA should shift back to a more strategic role and present a clear and enduring strategy.
- The NDA faces a difficult task coping with short Treasury-based funding cycles.

3. **Leadership**

- Departure of previous CEO viewed as a watershed – strong expectations for new, focused strategy.
- Stakeholders welcomed moves to a more consensual approach.
- Desire for new leadership to bring a strong financial direction to the organisation.

4. **Communications**

- Communications team have a difficult challenge and have performed well.
- There is scope for being more proactive liaising, where possible, on messages with other industry players.
- Overall belief that the NDA is now in a position to promote its successes more widely.
- Generally positive feedback on core communications with praise for both frequency and accuracy.

- All recognised the efforts to be open and transparent.
5.     **Stakeholder engagement**
    - Presentation of previous business plan was criticised – particularly over lack of early consultation, however, it was recognised that the NDA approach has since improved significantly.
    - Local stakeholder engagement generally well received although sometimes not always seen as sufficiently proactive.
    - Improvements can be made in the means by which the NDA communicates, e.g. demand for more summaries of information.
  6.     **Socio-economic issues**
    - Mixed feedback on the socio-economic agenda. Some work in Dounreay and Cumbria highlighted as successful, others felt a lot more could be done in this field.
  7.     **Culture**
    - Moving in the right direction toward a more open and transparent culture.
    - Some saw the NDA as becoming too bureaucratic and not sufficiently responsible to changing environments.
  8.     **New build**
    - The NDA now finds itself in the middle of a nuclear renaissance. It needs to tread very carefully around issues such as new build, although it was felt it could do more to reflect the 'new reality'.
  9.     **Waste**
    - Strong expectations of major progress on handling waste issues.
  10.    **Safety**
    - There was general satisfaction from stakeholders on safety issues.
  11.    **Skills**
    - The NDA was widely praised for its work on skills

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A qualitative survey of opinions and attitudes covering a diverse range of stakeholders often produces a wide range of views.

This audit of NDA stakeholders clearly conforms to this expected pattern, but nevertheless provides in-depth and contemporary insights into the work of the NDA and the expectations of stakeholders. Despite the diversity and different perspectives proffered, a number of common themes and regularly echoed opinions have been identified.

Overall, the NDA is broadly supported by all of its stakeholders; few were opposed to the work and most recognised that it was doing a good job in very difficult circumstances.

In conclusion, taking into account the diverse findings, we would like to make a number of recommendations for future consideration, and action, by the NDA.

- i. There is a need to take advantage of new leadership, and in particularly, **clarify a future NDA strategy**.
- ii. Longer term **funding commitments** should be sought from the Government.
- iii. The NDA should examine if and where internal **efficiencies** could be made.
- iv. There exists an opportunity to build further **bridges with stakeholders** – particularly with the general receptiveness to the organisation, which can be utilised in communications to establish and maintain stronger relations with all stakeholders.
- v. There should be a **more proactive communications** strategy that incorporates a wider range of audiences, although it should only do this when it has more clarity over its precise role in other aspects of nuclear work.
- vi. There is a need to seek further clarity from the Government as to the NDA's **role in new build** and ensure that the Government fully utilises the **skills and knowledge** within the NDA.
- vii. Currently, the NDA is not in a position to be a vocal advocate of nuclear new build; however, it should aim to be the **expert body on nuclear**.
- viii. There is further scope for the NDA to find ways of **communicating issues more clearly to the public**; particularly in relation to safety, waste and cost.
- ix. The NDA should find ways to examine and consult on its **relationships with contractors** to ensure that the best, most cost-effective working relationships are established.
- x. The NDA needs to ensure that stakeholders are fully aware of **socio-economic plans** and that this area is given greater prominence in its future work.

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