

## **DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

### **Note of Site Restoration / Socio economic sub groups**

All paperwork (for both sub group meetings due to take place on 11 November 2020) was issued to DSG members by email. Due to the restrictions of Covid-19 it was not possible to hold these meetings and therefore it was agreed that the paperwork would be issued as normal with DSG members providing comment on all documentation. All comments or questions are compiled into this report which now forms the minutes of the sub group meetings.

### **PAPERWORK PROVIDED SINCE THE LAST REPORT**

The protocol for DSG working virtually is detailed in DSG(2020)C027.

### **PAPERS/CORRESPONDENCE ISSUED SINCE LAST REPORT**

DSG(2020)M03: Feedback from sub group paperwork for July 2020

DSG(2020)M03a: DSG minute of meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (held via Teams)

DSG/BM(2020)M07 Business meeting, 15 September 2020

DSG/BM(2020)M08 Business meeting, 29 September 2020

DSG/BM(2020)M09 Business meeting, 13 October 2020

DSG/BM(2020)M10 Business meeting, 27 October 2020

DSG/BM(2020)M11 Business meeting, 17 November 2020

DSG/BM(2020)M12 Business meeting, 1 December 2020

DSG(2020)P030 ONR report for Dounreay, July to September 2020

DSG(2020)P031 DNSR report for Vulcan, July to Sept 2020

DSG(2020)P032 Rolls Royce update, November 2020

DSG(2020)P033 Dounreay progress report, November 2020

DSG(2020)P034 CNC update, November 2020

DSG(2020)P035 SEPA update, November 2020

DSG(2020)P036 Vulcan update, November 2020

DSG(2020)P037 CNSRP update, November 2020

DSG(2020)P038 NDA update, November 2020

DSG(2020)C046 Response to DSG letter re HIE budget cuts

DSG(2020)C047 Georgemas freight trial - letter re progress

DSG(2020)C048 DSG response to NDA draft strategy 4

DSG(2020)C049 NftR of meeting with David Peattie and Ros Rivaz on 14 October 2020

DSG(2020)C050 Highland Council - change of ward boundaries

DSG(2020)C051 DRS trial commercial freight, update November 2020

DSG(2020)C052 Notes of NDA integrated waste management plan - D Broughton observations

DSG(2020)C053 Pentland Housing/Cairn housing proposal for Thurso stock

DSG(2020)C054 HIE budget cuts - response to Scot Gov letter

DSG(2020)C055 Ltr to Buldoo residents – Response to action DSG(2020)M03/A026

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## FEEDBACK AND QUESTIONS RAISED

### Nuclear Decommissioning Authority:

**Questions on the site transition were raised in the July feedback paper. Further clarity has been requested on a number of questions. (for ease of reference the original question and answer is replicated here alongside the follow on question).**

- *Your response explains the mechanism of obtaining funds but could you confirm two things: 1) Will the UK Government fund the rebuilding every 100 years of the Dounreay HAW Stores even though that requirement is not current UK Government policy but only Scottish Government policy?, and 2) Where can the fully costed estimate for fully decommissioning Dounreay including the ongoing repeating costs for the rebuilding of the HAW Stores be found?*

**Response:** *NDA funding continues to come from UK Government and we will continue to comply with the legislation relating to decommissioning activity of our civil nuclear sites. It should be recognised that, in future years, both UK and Scottish Government policy will continue to evolve and of course we would be subject to, and abide by, any given legislation at that time. Meantime, any rebuilding requirement will be funded by UK Government, through the NDA, and in compliance with current UK Government legislation.*

- The above response (my second attempt at asking the question) is not answered at all. The question is straight forward – can I please have a response that provides an answer. Do you have lifetime costs for HAW stores?

**Response:** *It would be useful to have this as a discussion point at a DSG meeting to provide an explanation rather than trying to put in writing a response which would only provide part of the picture. [Secretary's note: will put on the agenda for a sub group meeting to discuss.]*

- *Will Dounreay be a stand-alone SLC and not subsumed in with other sites, i.e. a Magnox North model?*

**Response:** *There are no current plans to subsume Dounreay into other part of the group. Equally, Dounreay has a key role to play as part of the wider NDA Group and Estate and must not become isolated from that wider decommissioning activity. Any future changes around the One NDA Group will be made in full consultation with its staff and will always be made on the basis of how we can be more effective in delivering our decommissioning mission and offer greater value to the UK taxpayer.*

- Is that a yes then but you want to wait until things have settled down for a bit first. Given the response provide when the site transition was 'still a rumour' then this response would lead us to think you have more plans afoot.

**Response:** *Currently everyone's focus is on safe and secure delivery of our decommissioning mission and meeting the challenges of COVID19. As we progress in 2021, we accept that Dounreay will be part of something bigger and have a much greater contribution and influence throughout the NDA estate. Progress on our thinking will be shared with our workforce and stakeholders over the coming months.*

- If the country goes into lockdown again would the staff get full pay as before or not? I know this has helped the economy in Caithness as tradesmen have never been busier. This is a definite spin off from the money being paid to Dounreay workers.

**Response:** *Certainly, that would be our intention.*

- The NAO report published on 11 September on the NDA's termination of the Magnox contract reported a substantial amount of money going to the PBO. Does NDA know the cost of 'buying-out' the Dounreay PBO contract?

**Response:** *Any arrangements will be in line with the terms of our contract. The amounts are still being worked through.*

### **NDA (DSG(2020)P038)**

- SCCORS - If there is a meeting in Jan2021 to discuss it is important that DSG are represented. Can NDA ensure that SCCORS are aware of this and ensure that full engagement across all NDA Scottish sites is undertaken?

**Response:** *Of course, NDA will ensure this is the case.*

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### **DOUNREAY (DSG(2020)P033)**

#### **General comments:**

- Commendable move re training for fire fighters. The more training the better. Fire fighters are then more able to adapt to community situations and also if moving to further their careers have better knowledge and experience.
- Admirable response to funding 2 new portacabins. These could be added to the community register eventually
- Workshop for LLW pits.....absolutely vital the DSG is involved.

#### **Operations during COVID-19**

- I note that more than 50% of the workforce continues to work from home and it may be that they will continue with this until summer 2021. What has been the reaction of the staff to these proposals?

**Response:** *We're continuing to communicate regularly with the workforce and provide appropriate support. Having a longer planning horizon has been welcomed by some staff as it enables them to make decisions about their working area and we are providing equipment such as chairs to help make working from home easier. There are some members of staff who are struggling with the arrangement and we are providing additional support in these cases. Some members of the team are back in an office environment where this is the right solution for the individual and a risk assessment can be undertaken to demonstrate safe working arrangements.*

- I take it that with the current restrictions in place contractors would not be as welcome on site. Is the work on site therefore being reviewed to progress in house activities faster?

**Response:** *Safety and compliance are our highest priorities when considering what work can and should progress on site. Work is being reviewed to ensure that anything done is within the latest guidance. Within those boundaries, we want as many staff and contractors to be able to undertake work - providing important support to the supply chain.*

*For example, a number of contractors are involved in an outdoor construction project, which can proceed compliantly in a simpler way to some indoor activities where social distancing is more of a challenge.*

*The work being delivered, as well as COVID guidance, is kept under constant review.*

- Can you outline the impacts on the bus contract while the majority of your workforce continues to work from home? In addition, do you know what this will look like going forward (ie how is the contract working now and what are future plans in relations to these new hubs in Wick and Thurso). As many of us are aware the whole bus network has been in

the main supported by the need to have so many buses in the county for the DSRL contract, without this these services are not viable?

**Response:** The bus contract continues to operate. From the end of March, the number of buses operating was reduced in line with national lockdown requirements, with shift bus continuing to operate throughout.

Full service resumed in August, operating in a COVID-19 compliant manner. Office workers are predominately working from home and this has impacted bus usage. Working arrangements to accommodate social distancing measures on site have also changed some working patterns, impacting bus uptake.

We continue to monitor the usage of the bus contract. The intention is to continue with the bus contract, however it is recognised that there may be a need to review the service provision to reflect the demand from staff in the future, which is dependent upon ongoing COVID-19 impacts and the establishment of alternative working bases. DSRL is conscious of the socio economic benefit associated with this contract and will seek to engage with relevant stakeholders as part of any future review.

### ***Decommissioning update***

- Work on a three year near term work plan and a lifetime plan, this has been going on for years. Is there a confidence that these plans will finally be delivered ?

**Response:** The near term work plan and lifetime plan are being developed by DSRL based upon the current knowledge of the site's challenges. The plans will go through DSRL and NDA required governance and approval processes to ensure that they are underpinned and take appropriate consideration of the risks. However there remains an element of uncertainty in that many of the challenges associated with Dounreay's decommissioning have not been done before. Those risks will diminish as the work progresses over future years. DSRL remains committed to delivering the work safely and providing value for money.

- Would it be possible to provide further information on waste optimisation programme with a revised characterisation process? Can you expand on this please?

**Response:** In 2017, Dounreay asked the NDA's National Waste Programme to undertake a peer assist using other industry experts to review how the site was managing its LLW. This highlighted lots of good practices and a number of areas, or themes, for improvement. Those themes were collated under the banner of Waste Optimisation Programme. The themes were:

- Asset Optimisation - Site and LLW Disposal facility;
- Characterisation and Fingerprints
- Waste Treatment services - establishment of new capabilities and waste routes;
- Project Incentivisation and Cost Modelling
- Optimisation of Process

Three years on, we have just undertaken a virtual health check of how the programme has developed and delivered over the past 3 years. This report again highlighted areas of good progress and successes with some further observations. This feedback will now be considered internally to re-shape the Waste Optimisation Programme and change the themes for the next phase.

- I note the recent social media article on mobile robot being used for one of the most contaminated and inaccessible parts of the site. D1200, really? There were Pu labs but surely this should all have been contained within gloveboxes etc. and inaccessible questionable too? Use of superlatives like this reduces credibility in reports from the site.

**Response:** The robot was used to review drains in the facility to support the creation of updated, more detailed and appropriate decommissioning plans for that area. Our social media post didn't identify specific plants as we avoid this generally for security reasons.

- HIE and the Caithness Chamber has had regular conversations with site management about the supply chain following the Chamber's question to David Peattie about the need to get a pipeline of work out. While we recognise the furlough has been extended this is only giving the local supply chain companies some breathing space and ask that site gives this key focus to start some contracts flowing through?

**Response:** DSRL has facilitated regular dialogue with HIE and the Caithness Chamber to assess the situation with the supply chain. DSRL complies with UK Government guidelines for procurement activities and alongside the restrictions of site access, it is difficult to mobilise contracts that require people to be actively working on site. DSRL is doing everything it can to look at the pipeline of contracts due to be tendered and considering, how within the procurement rules, these could be helpful to the local supply chain. In addition, discussions are ongoing with the major companies in the Decommissioning Framework Services contract to explore whether there is anything additional they can bring to the table at this time.

### **Socio economics**

#### **General comments:**

- Engineering Industry Day - Good to see that this event will still take place virtually this year.
- Using all resources available to try to carry on a normal life with these virtual interviews is good. Another experience is welcome.

#### **Questions**

- Work continues to finalise a Socio Economic programme. Can the DSG realistically expect to see the results of the site skills audit and proposals for support of a Nuclear Services Hub before the end of 2020 ?

**Response:** DSRL, at the DSG meeting on 14 October, committed to providing a Socio Economic programme that will provide activity timelines. Included in this programme is the timeline covering all activities required to take the skills audit and nuclear services hub to completion alongside a number of other activities. Therefore, the audit output and hub business case will not be available by end of 2020. We are committed to provide the programme before Christmas and the development of the programme is on schedule to achieve this.

- Workforce Compliment - Why does there continue to be a large number Agency Workers required on site? (95 as per report)

**Response:** The ASW figure is a mixture of specialist support, administration and decommissioning operators. It has always been DSRL's policy to work through Agencies to supplement the DSRL workforce where the work is seen to be short term or to fulfil a specific need. These roles are kept under review and if specific posts are deemed to be required longer than 12 months a review on permanent recruitment is undertaken.

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### **CNC UPDATE (DSG(2020)P034)**

No issues raised.

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### **ONR report (DSG(2020)P030)**

**Comment:** Interesting to note the ONR response to the two lifting incidents that occurred on site this year. ONR has noted considerable improvement in key areas: Planning, Training and

Control and Supervision. It is obvious that Competency and Supervision was a major contributor to these incidents. Hopefully there will be no repeat incidents in the future.

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### **SEPA REPORT (DSG(2020)P035)**

Following update report further information was provided by SEPA on the habit survey – this was circulated to members on 20<sup>th</sup> November and is replicated here for ease of reference:

**SEPA Household Survey into impact of Coronavirus on dietary consumption and recreational activity:** Periodically, SEPA undertakes a radiological habits survey around the nuclear licensed sites across Scotland. These surveys are studies into the components of an individual's diet and what food comes from the local area. Additionally, the surveys look at where local people spend their time in the area, whether it is beaches, rambling or simply walking the dog. This information is extremely useful to SEPA in determining where our environmental monitoring programmes should seek to gather samples or measurements in the environment around the nuclear licensed sites. SEPA is aware that the coronavirus has had a major impact on the lives of everyone and we want to determine if this should lead to changes in our monitoring programme. Stirling University have been appointed by SEPA to undertake a short postal-survey of individuals across Scotland to determine if and how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted on availability of locally grown/caught and wild food. Some people have reported shortages of certain foods or that they are moving to growing more fruit and vegetables at home. We are also interested to discover if people are spending more time engaging in leisure pursuits or staying closer to home. The results of this survey will assist SEPA to determine if our environmental monitoring programme around nuclear sites needs to be amended to take account of changing habits. Around 1000 surveys will be sent to randomly selected addresses in the Caithness area with 7000 surveys being gathered in total from across Scotland. Should you not be randomly selected, but still wish to provide information an electronic survey will also be available and a link can be requested via [RSEnquiries@sepa.org.uk](mailto:RSEnquiries@sepa.org.uk).

### **Questions raised from P035**

- What is going to happen to the fuel flask debris? Where is it going to be disposed?

**Response:** DSRL's application states that the fuel flask debris will be returned to the site of origin i.e. Sellafield. Any further details on this should come from DSRL as SEPA have not completed its determination of the application.

- With reference to the levels of radioactivity at the point of discharge to the marine environment were below limits of detection. If this was so small, how was it detected?

**Response:** Activity was detected in samples taken by DSRL from a sump on the Dounreay site, which then discharges via the non-active drainage system to the marine environment. At the point of discharge to the marine environment from the non-active drain it was below the limit of detection for the analytical methods applied by DSRL.

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### **VULCAN (MOD) (DSG(2020)P036)**

- It would be helpful to understand more about the Vulcan decision to withdraw the PIN notice and how this impacts on the timescale for going out to tender for the decommissioning contract.

**Response:** We have been assessing the programme position in light of the ongoing COVID restrictions and this has identified some further operational activities that may be required post Dec 22. We have not yet determined the full scope of these, and the way ahead is still under consideration. This has resulted in the withdrawal of the Prior Information Notice for the Vulcan Site Management and Decommissioning competition published in March whilst we establish a clear way ahead. A new notice will be published on the Defence Contracts Bulletin in due course. However, we remain committed to the decommissioning of the site to a programme that remains coherent with that of Dounreay site programme.

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**DNSR (DSG(2020)P031)**

No issues raised.

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**Rolls Royce (DSG(2020)P032)**

**Comment:** Thank you for your report that contains slightly more detail than previous reports. General Manager Andy Maxwell has now been in post for over six months and it would be nice to meet (even virtually) with Andy and introduce him to DSG members.

**Response:** I would be happy to meet virtually or face to face if current restrictions allow.

[Secretary's note: discussions ongoing at this time to identify a suitable date for meeting with the DSG business group].

- How far beyond 2022 is Rolls Royce proposing to be active in the area for?

**Response:** In terms of how long past 2022 Rolls-Royce will be in Caithness, we are working on several strategies depending on the schedule to support our on-site customer, potentially being involved in the decommissioning programme for Vulcan and several other local and national support options that may be available in the medium to longer term. Unfortunately, at this time there are too many unknowns to commit to any specific timescales.

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Current as at 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020