

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

**Minutes of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group (DSG) public meeting held on Wednesday 20 September at 19:00 in the Pentland Hotel/Teams**

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Struan Mackie (SM) David Alexander (DA) Peter Faccenda (PF) Gillian Coghill(GC) Roger Saxon (RS) David Craig (DC) Brian Mutch (BM)  Trudy Morris (TM) Sandy Mackie (SMac) Tor Justad (TJ) Ron Gunn (RG) Eann Sinclair (ES) Cllr Karl Rosie (KR) Christian Nicolson (CN) Cllr Andrew Jarvie (AJ) Cllr Dr Stephen Clackson (SC) Mary-Jane Stratham (MJS)	Chair (The Highland Council) Vice-chair (Thurso and Wick Trades Council) Focus North Programme Manager Buldoos Residents Independent Chair DSG Honorary Member Caithness West Community Council Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspection Directorate Caithness Chamber of Commerce Scrabster Harbour Trust HANP CHAT Highlands and Islands Enterprise Highland Council NHS Highland Highland Council Orkney Islands Council Women in Nuclear and Gender Balance Network
<b>Attending:</b>	Mac MacGill (MMc) Mark Rouse (MR) Mick Moore (MM) Barrie Cran (BC) Alan Mackay (AM) James Francis (JF) Stewart Ballantine (SB) Cdr Ian Walker (IW) Diane Hamilton (DH) Gail Ross (GR) Tina Wrighton (TW) Ollie Smith (OS) Pat Green (PG) Josh George (JG) David Calder (DC) Rob Bly (RB) Steve Marden (SMar) Dawn Clasper (DC1) Caitlin Flavell (CF)	Dounreay Chief of Staff / Deputy Managing Director Dounreay Managing Director Dounreay Director of Operations Dounreay Director of Assurance NDA Site Facing Team ONR SEPA MOD Vulcan SG Radwaste Dounreay Head of Communications Dounreay Stakeholder & External Relations Lead Magnox Seconded to the Scottish Government CNC Dounreay Director of Organisational Excellence Dounreay Head of Socioeconomics & Sustainability Dounreay Senior Manager Resilience Highland Council Socio Economics Administrator Minute Secretary

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and introductions**

SM welcomed everyone to the meeting and affirmed the importance of the hybrid approach to allow accessibility.

### **2. Apologies**

The following apologies were received:

- CI David McIntosh, CNC
- Debbie Murray, UHI North Highland College
- Michelle Johnstone, NHS Highland
- David Wallace, NDA Stakeholder Lead, Scotland
- Thelma Mackenzie, Thurso Community Council
- Niall Watson, Dounreay Trade Unions
- David Broughton, DSG co-opted member of the public
- James Bryson, DNSR

### **3. Sodium Storage**

Mick Moore gave a presentation on the hazards of and plans for the storage of sodium. TJ asked for the meaning of medium-term. MM clarified that the planned dates were 2027 to build a new storage facility and 2033-35 for new processing. TJ then asked if the sodium were to be transported, what conditions would it be transported under? MM responded that it was too early to say and to choose that option would require significant consideration; it would conform to international standards in any case.

RS noted some disappointment that this had been an ongoing issue for some time, and that it would take the development of an entire new facility to solve. SM asked where Dounreay stood in relation to others dealing with similar problems, and MM confirmed that others were at a similar stage of developing a solution.

### **4. Dounreay Updates**

#### **NDA Corporate:**

AM referred to the written report and noted that the annual accounts had been delivered on 19 September.

#### **NDA Dounreay:**

MR reported that the site remained safe and secure. He encouraged staff to raise reports of all concerns and told the group that he saw all those reports personally and was very aware of them; he noted that he could only act on fact and within a system. He shared that he was proud of the improvements that had been made, and that the NDA was holding the site to account. Currently, Dounreay is going through the rebuilding phase of the Lifetime Plan (LTP) which was going through final checks, and he hoped to move to a delivery and performance phase shortly.

MMc gave the rest of the update, firstly stating that TRIR remained steady and they were hoping to bring it lower still. Relationships with the safety and trade union representatives were recovering and developing. On the issue of electrical safety, they were focusing on strategic issues and the long-term. On mission delivery, they continued to progress in-year targets and the remnants programme had been completed. The LTP programme business case is now under

review by the NDA. He mentioned a number of positives for the business, including the successful family day and some employees that had been nominated for awards.

It was asked whether a community engagement would be possible on the LTP, since monthly briefings were already being held with staff. It was clarified that the briefings were to reassure staff about their futures, and that the plan of engagement over the next year was completely aligned with the LTP.

It was asked how budget pressures would impact the business. Housekeeping would have to be done wisely, and it was hoped that FFF would increase efficiency.

There was discussion around the single performance measure that had slipped to threshold, which was a target the business had set themselves and not a regulatory issue.

There was discussion around the new site structure and how this would impact staff numbers. The new organisation structure would come with time, and whilst Dounreay could not control everything, they had a strong voice to shape outcomes. The new company's success would be shared with Dounreay.

It was asked whether the high level of change was impacting staff morale; was answered that Dounreay used a staff engagement survey to keep tabs on the workforce, which had significant engagement. It was noted that there had been many attempts to change the model of management at Dounreay with varying degrees of success, and that Dounreay would benefit from being open to scrutiny from the DSG. It was also noted that change brought benefit for young people and engaging with them often brought good ideas.

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A001: SM requested that a written response to his questions about spend be discussed in the restoration subgroup.**

**SEPA:**

SB informed the group that a number of inspections had been carried out in which the site had been found fully compliant. He also noted there was no concern about the target that had slipped. He gave the update that one of the hopes that SEPA had for the joining with Magnox was the combining of knowledge from all sites, and that the feedback from the team was that was starting to feed through.

There was some discussion about particles, noting that Dounreay reports every particle find as they happen and publish on the website.

**ONR:**

ONR has conducted inspections on alkali metal storages, investigations, and maintenance arrangements, amongst other things. They found areas of improvement to be made in site investigations. On the previous reported enforcement against electrical safety, there had been good interaction with site, leading to a downgraded tension. Due to notable fatalities in the industry recently, a number of new things would be looked at.

There was discussion about the application to be considered under COMAH regulations and how they would impact the site. Dounreay will apply under the COMAH regulations to be considered a "lower tier site", impact on surrounding area is expected to be low. MMc noted that this change had been initiated internally, due to new expertise which propelled positive change and allowed a pre-emptive measure.

**CNC:**

PG gave the update for the CNC, including that the visit from the chief constable went well, and that CNC had positively participated in a number of community events. They were hoping to run

a training course in Caithness, which would remove a barrier for entry for a number of locals and improve recruitment.

## **5. MOD (Vulcan) Updates**

### **MOD Vulcan:**

IW reported that there had been no lost time accidents or reportable events reported since the last meeting, nor any challenges to the Approval of Arrangements (AoA). Following RAAC being in the news, they had checked for RAAC on site and found none. Operations continued successfully. The Lonestar planning demonstration exercise was underway and IW explained that the exercise would be confined to the Vulcan site, however the alarms would be sounded.

Following challenge by ONR on the application of radiation risk assessments, a follow-up inspection had been completed yesterday which included review of the improvement plan that had previously been agreed. The feedback from ONR was positive, though they requested further documentation (this documentation was discussed during the inspection). We await issuing of the formal inspection report, though we are hopefully that the associated Regulatory Issue (RI) will be closed.

The family day went well.

There was some discussion around reported new opportunities in the submarine industry and how those would affect Rolls Royce and Caithness. The group has written to the Secretary of State indicating that we have significant expertise to offer.

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A002: the group would request clarity about the meaning of the new opportunities from Rolls Royce.**

### **SEPA:**

SB confirmed there was nothing to add to Cdr Walker's update and the previously reported updates.

SM invited questions, none received.

### **ONR:**

JF confirmed there were no updates for the Vulcan site as there was no on-site attendance during the reporting period. They had looked at ionising radiation regulations and found positive outcomes, but this was awaiting a formal report.

## **6. Minutes of previous meeting**

SM gave the following statement:

"Members,

As Chair of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group, I wish to inform Members that the DSG received a complaint about the proceedings of our last meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, and the conduct of the Chair, in relation to item 8, any other competent business. Specifically, the question and statement made regarding the A-Block at Thurso High School, which was read out verbatim, as your minute DSG/PM(2023)M02 refers.

The substantive complaint concerns both the manner in which the question was handled and the conduct of the Chair, albeit externally from the meeting.

Members, my public comment outside the DSG on forums external to this Group (such as Facebook or in press) is not a matter for this Site Stakeholder Group. But I wish to stress that all Elected Members have a responsibility to provide public representation, scrutiny and honesty. All of which form part of the Councillor's Code of Conduct, as published by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life (Scotland). In response to the complaint, Members of the Business Group did however investigate the matter independently. I played no role in the deliberations or the ultimate recommendations.

My colleagues have deemed that there has been confusion and a potential conflict of interest on the aforementioned item and that the Chair should have excused themselves from proceedings and not provide comment. Failing to do so created the opportunity for a personal or Elected Member view to be portrayed as that of the DSG as a whole. It is also worth noting that my appointment to this forum is no longer made through the Highland Council but by the Membership of this group.

Whilst a clear declaration of interest was made at the start of the meeting, as per your minute, the lack of other local authority representatives (from the Highland Council) should have necessitated delegation. And it should have been passed to my Vice-Chair Davie (Alexander). I consider this procedural issue to have been regrettable, and easily avoidable. To that end, I wish to apologise to Members and assure them that we will use greater caution in the future. The Dounreay Stakeholder Group is a widely respected vehicle for the scrutiny of both our civil and nuclear sites in Caithness and North Sutherland, but it is also a vital forum for the dissemination of information, a collaborative space for stakeholders, statutory agencies and the general public. I am incredibly proud of the way the work we do is viewed both nationally and internationally.

In order to further ensure that future conflicts can be avoided, I am delighted to report that we have both increased attendance from local authority members (from Highland) in the subsequent meetings, including this public meeting where all current representatives are present. And that for the first time in well over a year, we now have representation from the County of Sutherland. With an elected Member (Cllr Michael Baird, North West and Central Sutherland) having been appointed this week."

The minutes of the last public meeting (DSG(2023)M02) held on 7 June 2023 were ratified, proposed by DC and seconded by PF.

The minutes of the DSG socioeconomic subgroup (DSG/SESG (2023) M02) held on 19 July 2023 were ratified, proposed by DA and seconded by PF.

SMac asked about a query he had posed around working from home, noting that he was very surprised to hear there were no metrics on staff productivity. MMc informed him that he had attendance numbers on site from COVID lockdown measures, and that 1,000 staff attended site on a regular basis.

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A003: MMc would provide more information on staff numbers present on site**

DA noted that the subgroup had been happy with the follow-up response received generally. MMc added that productivity increased when teams were given autonomy to determine their own way of working.

The minutes of the DSG site restoration subgroup (DSG/SRSG(2023)M02) held on 19 July 2023 were ratified, proposed by GC and seconded by TJ. There was extensive discussion about

potential topics for future meetings, including the Sutherland spaceport. It was agreed that a presentation would be a good idea for a future meeting, as there were numerous questions, and all members would be invited.

## **7. Status of actions**

The status of actions was taken as read. TJ asked if there had been a response to a follow-up with the UK Government about medical isotopes, which had been labelled as commercially sensitive. TW reported that the commercial classification had been confirmed again. SM agreed to push back on this response some more.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Steve Marden (SMar) of the Highland Council gave a report on the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone and recent changes that had been made. RS asked how the change had been instigated and SMar responded that the decision rested solely with Highland Council; however, MMc added that Dounreay had been involved and proactive in the initiation of the conversation.

There was discussion around attendance from Orkney and Shetland, and SC shared his belief that the travel-to-work area could be revised, as Orkney felt on the periphery of discussions despite the fact that Orkney residents attended work at Vulcan.

## **9. Close**

There being no further business, Cllr Struan Mackie thanked everyone for their input and formally closed the meeting.

**Cllr Struan Mackie**  
**DSG Chair**  
20 Sept 2023

## **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A001:** SM requested that a written response to his questions about spend be discussed in the restoration subgroup.

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A002:** the group would request clarity about the meaning of the new opportunities in the submarine industry from the writer of the report.

**ACTION: DSG/PM(2023)M03/A003:** MMc would provide more information on staff numbers attending site and productivity.