

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

**Minutes of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group Public Meeting, held at 19:00 on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at the Pentland Hotel, Thurso and via MS Teams.**

<b>Present:</b>	David Alexander (DA)	DSG Vice-chair
	Roger Saxon (RS)	DSG Site Restoration subgroup chair
	David Broughton (DB)	DSG Site Restoration subgroup vice chair
	Gillian Coghill (GC)	Buldoo Residents Group
	Peter Faccenda (PF)	Focus North (DSG Socio economic subgroup vice chair
	Eann Sinclair (ES)	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
	Christian Nicholson (CN)	NHS
	Marie Cuthbert (MC)	NHS
	Donna Chambers (DC)	Caithness Chamber of Commerce
	Nail Watson (NW)	Dounreay Trade Unions
	David Craig (DC)	Caithness West Community Council
	Lauren Mackay (LM)	WiN
	Ken Nicol (KN)	Co-opted member of the public
	John Deighan (JD)	Co-opted member of the public
	Sandy Mackie (SM)	Co-opted member of the public
<b>Attending:</b>	Dave Wilson (DW)	NRS Dounreay Managing Director
	Mac MacGill (MM)	NRS Dounreay EHSSQ Director
	David Calder (DC)	NRS Head of Socio-economic and sustainability
	Gail Ross (GR)	NRS Dounreay Head of Communications and Stakeholder Relations
	Heather Hannam (HH)	NRS Dounreay Head of People
	Alan Mackay (AM)	NDA Site Facing Team
	C/Insp Paul Gilmartin (PG)	CNC
	Cdr Ian Walker (IW)	MOD Vulcan
	Stewart Ballentine (SB)	SEPA
	James Francis (JF)	ONR
	Govinder Sangha (GS)	ONR
	Ferne Mill (FM)	NRS Dounreay Communications
	Carol Wood (CW)	NRS Dounreay Communications

**MINUTES****1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

David Alexander welcomed everyone to the meeting. DA noted two applications were received to become co-opted members of the DSG. DA formally proposed Alan Scott and Sandy Mackie for full membership. GC seconded the proposal.

## 2. APOLOGIES

The following apologies were received:

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Struan Mackie           | Chair                         |
| • Diane Hamilton          | Scottish Government           |
| • Ron Gunn                | CHAT                          |
| • Cllr Jan McEwan         | Highland Council              |
| • David Wallace           | NDA                           |
| • James Bryson            | DNSR                          |
| • Lyndsay Hernandez       | CNC                           |
| • Alex Pitsillos          | ONR                           |
| • Cllr Dr Steven Clackson | Orkney Council                |
| • Tina Wrighton           | NRS Dounreay                  |
| • Trudy Morris            | Caithness Chamber of Commerce |

## 3. DOUNREAY UPDATE

**NDA Corporate:** Alan Mackay reported:

The report was taken as read with no update.

DB noted a technical observation with the wording in the NDA paper and asked if this could be corrected.

AM agreed to note DB comments and will update the NDA paper.

**NRS Dounreay:** Dave Wilson reported:

The report was taken as read.

The annual NDA delivery targets are progressing well. The site has completed four of nine milestones on decommissioning so far, this financial year and expect the fifth to be achieved by the end of December. Assets and infrastructure are making good progress with seven of sixteen targets met.

Regarding the Government spending review - the site now has visibility on expected funding for the remainder of the current Parliamentary term. A positive funding settlement has been secured for Dounreay.

NRS Dounreay held their second quarterly supply chain event earlier in September with over 100 attending.

A team from Dounreay will attend the NDA supply chain event in Dunblane on 13 November.

NRS Dounreay will attend the Chamber of Commerce annual dinner and the upcoming Focus North conference.

The site is pushing forward with their plan to return to routine regulatory position. NRS Dounreay has shared their comprehensive action plan with ONR and continue to work through it.

NRS Dounreay continues engagement with SEPA. There is an enforcement action which is ongoing regarding non-active drainage. The site is clear in what action is required to resolve this position.

The REDE 25 annual security exercise is taking place on 24 September.

Last month DW signed 70 cards of congratulation to members of staff who have been on site for 20, 30 or 40 years. Since January the site has recruited 195 new members of staff with 20 new apprentices and 13 direct entry graduates.

The site held its annual indentures ceremony which saw a group of apprentices receiving awards. DW was pleased to see Fallon Campbell (a Dounreay apprentice) and our equality, diversity and inclusion team shortlisted for a ECTIB national award.

One of the site's apprentices, Lewis Mackay, attended the NDA event in Parliament on 8 September to mark its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

NRS Dounreay is the main sponsor of the Highlands and Islands Apprentice Awards 2025.

To celebrate Dounreay's 70-year anniversary the site has been present at many local community events. The NDA also held an event, which welcomed King Charles to Scrabster harbour, to celebrate multiple milestones within the group.

RS spoke of the D1204 pond and asked if water was still in the pond and are particles potentially still there.

RS also enquired about the condition of the D1310 labs, are they suitable and would it have been more cost effective to demolish and rebuild.

DW confirmed there was still water in the pond, which has been lowered in height to reduce any possibility of seepage. The site is currently working with supply chain on the plan to remove inventory.

DW noted Dounreay is in the process of updating both facilities and equipment which are vital to the site.

GC asked about the rolling programme of maintenance.

DW explained the site is prioritising the intervention work on the assets and is using the systematic approach to do this.

A member of the public raised a question regarding “celebrating 70 years’, if the site was to drive on a lot longer than planned, how do you think the public might react to the use of the word “celebrating” when we are celebrating 100 years on site.

DW explained we are celebrating 70 years of a legacy, first of a kind reactor in the world, experimental reactors and the nuclear industry learnt so much from the work carried out.

DA thanked DW for his update.

No further questions were asked.

**SEPA:** Stewart Ballentine reported:

The report was taken as read.

SB confirmed a site inspection is planned within next few weeks and would report on that at the next sub-group.

No questions were asked.

DA thanked SB for his update.

**ONR:** James Francis reported:

The report was taken as read.

An inspection carried out in May concluded that Dounreay’s improved storage arrangements relating to Alkali metal were now fit for purpose for the duration of the storage period.

A separate improvement notice has been issued on manual handling, which was reported at the previous meeting. In response Dounreay have requested an additional extension until 25 October, which was granted by ONR.

A positive meeting took place with Dounreay’s senior management team and ONR managers to discuss ONR’s expectations for enhanced regulatory attention.

JF confirmed this would be his final DSG meeting and he will now hand over to Govinder Sangha.

GC thanked JF for the time he has been with DSG.

DA raised a question for clarity within the paragraph that refers to Dounreay arrangements for compliance with pressure system regulations 2000 (PSSR)

JF clarified what the paper was referring to.

DA asked if there were any recurring issues with the safety representatives?

JF explained the meetings held between the safety representatives and ONR were confidential.

DA thanked JF for his updates and wished him well in his new role.

**CNC:** Chief Inspector Paul Gilmartin reported:

CNC continue to support Police Scotland and within the few months have had live firearms deployed. Officers from other sites are covering when there is a shortfall in numbers.

CNC have been developing some learning and are integrating it into their training which is seeing some positive results in increased confidence in their officers.

CNC celebrated their 20 years anniversary. They attended the national arboretum near Lichfield for a ceremony to celebrate this.

Blue light driving training has been taking place for officers as part of their accreditation.

The training which currently takes place at Culham, is hoped to be held locally which will hopefully attract more local interest in recruiting.

The recruitment campaign has started again with a leaflet campaign in the local area and expanding to Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Another thing being looked at is financial incentives to encourage officers to the area.

Community engagement continues.

GC enquired about accommodation for officers as there is currently a shortage in the area.

C/Insp PG stated accommodation opportunities were being looked at in the immediate area.

DA thanked C/Insp PG for his update.

No further questions were raised.

#### **4. MOD VULCAN**

**MOD Vulcan:** Cdr Ian Walker reported:

The report was taken as read.

In regards to health and safety Vulcan has had one lost time injury; an employee required three stitches to a cut finger.

Vulcan had one environmental event, during routine maintenance it was discovered there was a minor fuel leak between the diesel generator daily use tank and the underground storage tank. SEPA were informed and no action taken.

The site has now received a Pollution Prevention and Control Permit for their Medium Combustion Plant effective from 1 September.

Since the last meeting, no events have occurred that required reporting to DNSR or ONR, in accordance with their mandatory reporting criteria.

Vulcan has now received the full DNSR assessment for LONESTAR 25, it was assessed as an adequate demonstration of the arrangements.

The site successfully undertook their security exercise in the early hours of 3 September.

During this reporting period, there have been no regulatory inspections with DNSR. DNSR visited site to assess the onsite aspects of the LONESTAR demonstration exercise.

The Defence Fire Safety Regulator conducted a safety audit and assessed as green.

The site has had a visit by the Sovereign disposal team based in Rosyth to further discuss transfer of equipment held at Vulcan to support their project in Rosyth.

MOD's telephone operator service was recently stopped, and the site has now purchased an auto attendant digital operator to replicate that function.

GC asked if there was a decrease in MOD officers working on site and did it make an impact during the exercise?

Cdr IW confirmed there was no compromise during the exercise.

DA reported that in the pack there is an update from Rolls-Royce. if there are any questions, please report to the secretariat and they will be forwarded on for answers.

DA thanked Cdr IW for his update.

No further questions were raised.

#### **DNSR:**

There was no one in attendance from DNSR.

Questions on the report should be directed through the secretariat.

#### **SEPA:** Stewart Ballentine reported:

The report was taken as read.

No questions were raised.

#### **ONR:** James Francis reported:

The report was taken as read.

Within this period, ONR attended the Vulcan site once to undertake a safety walkdown and have discussions with management. There was nothing raised to report.

DA thanked JF for his update.

No questions were raised.

## **5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

DA noted the minutes of the last public meeting (DSG/PM(2025)M002) held on 4 June 2025 had been circulated to members in advance. He invited members to raise any issues from the minutes. No issues were raised. The minutes were proposed by PF seconded by JD.

The minutes of the DSG socio economic subgroup (DSG/SESG(2025)M002) held on 16 July were endorsed by the group proposed by DA and seconded by JD.

The minutes of the DSG site restoration subgroup (DSG/SRSG(2025)M002) held on 16 July were endorsed by the group, proposed by RS and seconded by JD.

## **6. STATUS OF ACTIONS**

The status of actions was taken as read.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

DA noted there was no correspondence.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

DB commented on the Focus North paper and expressed his disappointment the summer programme had no work experience organised in the area.

DB also noted several members of the DSG attended the NDA webinar for strategy 5 which was long and interesting but noted no mention of apprentice training which he found disappointing.

PF confirmed work placements are an issue in the way they are organised. For school students there must be a process to ensure the company can look after them.

DW confirmed Dounreay and senior members of NDA are committed to the apprentice programme.

A member of the public enquired about the funding that was given to the North Coast Visitors Centre (NCVC).

A member of the public asked how Dounreay will agree funding for the NCVC now it has reduced hours.

DA confirmed this issue has been discussed at the business meeting.

## **9. CLOSE**

DA thanked everyone for their input and formally closed the meeting.

**David Alexander**  
**DSG Vice-chair**

17 September 2025

## **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

None

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