

ONR NGO Forum – 11 October 2018	
Title	Briefing Paper on the UK SSAC Project
From	ONR Policy & Communications
Date	11 October 2018
Status	For information
Agenda Item / Status	<i>N/A – There will be an opportunity for questions following the presentation by Mark Foy on 11 October 2018</i>

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This paper is to update members of the NGO forum on the UK State System of Accountancy for and Control of Nuclear Material (SSAC) project.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of its preparations for Brexit, the government announced its commitment to leaving the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). As a result, the UK will need to establish a UK SSAC to meet international safeguards obligations. ONR's SSAC project is therefore working to establish a UK SSAC that enables the UK to meet international safeguards obligations from 29 March 2019. Government policy is that a future domestic safeguards regime should be equivalent in effectiveness and coverage to that currently provided by Euratom. ONR will therefore build upon the SSAC from March 2019 to deliver, in time, a regime that meets government's policy commitment of equivalence.
- 2.2 The Nuclear Safeguards Act 2018, which received Royal Assent in June, amends The Energy Act 2013 to give ONR the necessary powers to deliver a UK SSAC. Government is developing Nuclear Safeguards Regulations to underpin the Nuclear Safeguards Act, and set out the detail of the new domestic safeguards regime. The draft regulations were subject to public consultation between 9 July and 14 September 2018. Government is currently analysing the responses and expects to lay the regulations in Parliament by the end of 2018, subject to parliamentary time.

## 3 UK SSAC PROJECT

- 3.1 The work streams for the project have been refined since the last update at the March NGO forum; updates on each work stream are provided below.
- 3.2 **Support to BEIS' development of legal framework and international negotiations:** We continue to work closely with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to provide expert safeguards advice on the development of the draft Nuclear Safeguards Regulations, and through government's negotiations of new Nuclear Cooperation Agreements with the USA, Canada, Australia and Japan.

- 3.3 **Safeguards Information Management and Reporting IT System (SIMRS):** SIMRS will enable ONR to manage and process nuclear materials accountancy reports from operators and submit these to the IAEA in line with the UK's international obligations. The contract for the development of SIMRS was awarded on 31 May to Axis 12, in partnership with NAC International. Their expertise has been demonstrated through the development of SIMRS, which is on track for testing and operations by the end of 2018, as planned.
- 3.4 **Organisational capacity:** We now have 14 safeguards officers in place and undergoing training to become nuclear safeguards inspectors. We have also appointed three nuclear material accountants to the team and have met our recruitment target for delivery of a UK SSAC that enables the UK to meet its international safeguards obligations from March 2019.
- 3.5 **Organisational capability:** Our training programme for nuclear safeguards inspectors is being delivered, with nuclear material accountants beginning their training as they join the team. In addition to the warranting training process for inspectors, and on the job training in safeguards, the team will receive safeguards training from the IAEA in November.
- 3.6 **Regulatory framework:** We are working to develop a regulatory framework and operating model for the UK SSAC that takes account of ONR's role as the regulator for nuclear safety and security, and draws upon the evidence available to ONR through these disciplines to support our safeguards regulation. This work stream includes consideration of the use of any safeguards equipment to deliver the UK SSAC.
- 3.7 **Integration and implementation:** This developing work stream focuses on integrating the different work streams of the project together effectively to enable implementation of the UK SSAC.