**CM9 Record Ref.:** 2023/20672

**Chief Nuclear Inspector’s 14th Independent Advisory Panel**

**Summary of Panel Advice**

**Held at 11:00AM on Friday 31 March 2023**

**In-person Meeting**

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| **Present:**  Mark Foy (chair - ONR)  Alan Poole  Fiona Rayment  Francis Livens  Jill Sutcliffe  Jo Nettleton  Peter Burt (virtual only)  Robin Grimes  Tim Abram | **In Attendance:**  David Smeatham (presenter - ONR)  Mike Finnerty (presenter - ONR)  Tim Parkes (presenter - ONR) |
| **Secretariat:**  Paul Garesse (presenter - ONR) | **Apologies:**  Dame Sue Ion  Donald Urquhart (ONR)  Jen Ablitt  John May  Paul Bowen  Sarah Williamson |

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|  | **Supporting information circulated before meeting** |
|  | 2023/20663 - Meeting Agenda |
|  | 2023/20665; 2023/20666; 2023/20668 - Presentations |
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| **1** | **Welcome and Introductions** |
|  | This record captures advice given on topics presented at the Chief Nuclear Inspector’s (CNI) 14th Independent Advisory Panel (IAP). The objectives of the meeting were: |
|  | 1. To provide a forum in which experts representing a variety of technical perspectives may provide independent advice to inform ONR’s proposals for development of regulatory policies and strategies. 2. To identify and advise ONR on future developments in nuclear technologies and their potential implications for nuclear regulation. 3. To advise on the adequacy and balance of the safety and security research needs identified by ONR and the work commissioned to meet them. 4. To facilitate ONR’s engagement with external centres of technical excellence. |
|  | ONR announced two new members to join the panel:   * Alan Poole (Technical Excellence and Export Controls Director) to replace David Boath (now retired) as a representative from industry. * Jen Ablitt (ORR Deputy Director Safety Strategy, Policy and Planning) to provide insight and experience from another regulator.   ONR also welcomed Jill Sutcliffe to her first face to face meeting since joining the panel. |
|  | ONR announced that the terms of reference for the panel had been updated and would be shared with all members for comment prior to acceptance. |
|  | ONR stated that they would include pen portraits of panel members on the ONR website to enhance the IAP profile and publish meeting summaries to improve transparency. |
|  | The panel confirmed there were no conflicts of interest with the topics being presented. |
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| **2** | **Sharing lessons learned and identifying opportunities that could accelerate new nuclear reactor generation** |
|  | ONR presented on the topic (2023/20665). Recommendations made and agreed by the panel are as follows: |
|  | * ONR should progress plans to host a dedicated expert panel on acceleration - new nuclear regulation. They should consider representation/input from other regulators, advisory groups, international agencies, government bodies/agencies (e.g., Great British Nuclear) and potentially financiers. * ONR should recognise potential issues between its mission to protect society, its drive for enabling regulation and perceptions that it may relax standards to accelerate new nuclear. ONR must maintain its position as a robust and trusted regulator. * Once Great British Nuclear is more established, ONR should look to work with them to seek improvements, where possible, in the coordination of regulators roles in support of new nuclear. * ONR should explore opportunities to work closer with government to explore pathways to help deliver net zero. * ONR should further explore opportunities to accelerate the licensing process for newer technologies and implications on organisational setup (e.g., cogeneration and small units across multiple sites). * ONR should continue emphasising the need for design maturity prior to regulatory engagement and commencement of any assessment. |
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| **3** | **ONR’s role in influencing industry to building a resilient and capable workforce** |
|  | ONR presented on the topic (2023/20666). Recommendations made and agreed by the panel are as follows: |
|  | * ONR should continue to continue to treat this topic as a regulatory priority, recognising the lack of coordination across industry. * ONR progress to date (e.g., development of ONR Academy and alternative recruitment pathways) can be regarded as good practice and ONR should maintain primary focus internally to ensure sufficient in-house capability/skill (and capacity). Support to industry and other organisations should be offered where possible. * ONR should consider how they can help address poor perceptions associated with working in the nuclear industry and consider what can be done to improve the ‘STEM pipeline’. * ONR should recognise the need to develop and train subject matter experts (SMEs) and support where possible. * ONR should consider how they can enhance secondments to improve learning and knowledge transfer across the industry. * ONR should consider developing a risk register to better understand and manage challenges around the national context of skills shortages. |
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| **4** | **Operating reactors overview (focus on future challenges)** |
|  | ONR presented on the topic (2023/20668). Recommendations made and agreed by the panel are as follows: |
|  | * (Similarly, to topic 2) ONR should recognise potential issues between its mission to protect society, its drive for enabling regulation and perceptions that it may relax standards due to external pressures. ONR must maintain its position as a robust and trusted regulator. * ONR should explore learning opportunities from the US fleet (i.e., Standardized Nuclear Unit Power Plant System [SNUPPS]) which could apply to the UK fleet (i.e., Sizewell B). * ONR should continue monitoring organisational changes at EDF NGL to better understand the impact their UK operations and technical capability to support future ambitions. The importance of leadership should be recognised. * ONR should be cognisant of changes in the French nuclear industry (i.e., EDF SA, ASN and IRSN) which may impact the UK. * ONR should continue to be mindful of financial pressures on EDF NGL. |
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| **5** | **Next Steps** |
|  | A date for the next panel in Autumn 2023 is to be agreed through correspondence. |
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|  | The meeting closed at 14:20 |
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