ONR NGO Forum - Meeting Minutes   
16 November 2023 (1000-1215) - Held over Zoom

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| In Attendance (ONR): | In Attendance (NGO): |
| Rachel Grant (RG) – Director of Policy and Communications (ONR co-chair)  Mark Foy (MF) – Chief Executive and Chief Nuclear Inspector  Shane Turner – Superintending Inspector  **Secretariat/organisers:**  Lydia Bower – Communications Manager  Daniel Jones – Communications Manager  Enid Lovelady – Communications Officer | Dr Jill Sutcliffe (JS) – Low Level Radiation and Health Conference (NGO co-chair)  Jean Allen – Bradwell B Action Network  Katy Attwater (KA) – Stop Hinkley  Sue Aubrey (SA) – Stop Hinkley  Dr Ruth Balogh (RB) – West Cumbria and North Lakes Friends of the Earth  Peter Banks (PBan) – Blackwater Against New Nuclear  Prof. Andy Blowers (AB) – Blackwater Against New Nuclear  Richard Bramhall (RBR) – Low Level Radiation Campaign  Peter Burt (PB) – Nuclear Awareness Group/Nuclear Education Trust  Paul Collins – Stop Sizewell C  David Cullen (DC) – Nuclear Information Service  Stephen Dewick (SD) – Bradwell B Action Network  Alison Downes (AD) – Stop Sizewell C  Joan Girling – Together Against Sizewell C  Allan Jeffrey (AJ) – Stop Hinkley  Tor Justad (TJ) – Highlands Against Nuclear Power  Richard Outram (RO) – Nuclear Free Local Authorities  Ian Ralls (IR) – Friends of the Earth Nuclear Network  Mike Taylor (MT) – Together Against Sizewell C  Pete Wilkinson (PW) – Together Against Sizewell C  Chris Wilson (CW) – Together Against Sizewell C |

**Apologies:**

Alan McGoff – Environment Agency

1. Welcome and introductions
   1. Rachel Grant (RG) and Dr Jill Sutcliffe (JS) welcomed everyone to the Forum meeting. JS passed on her thanks to those involved in the recent climate change workshops. She noted the recent passing of Professor Saleemul Huq, a climate scientist who contributed to major reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and headed the International Centre on Climate Change. JS also noted that it was 40 years ago since campaigners had successfully stopped a nuclear power station being built in Cornwall. JS invited Mark Foy (MF) to deliver his presentation.
2. ONR Presentation – Mark Foy
   1. MF started his presentation by showing a short video outlining the key findings from this year’s Chief Nuclear Inspector’s (CNI) Annual Report. He noted that overall industry performance had been good, but that ONR wanted to see improvements in convention health and safety (CHS) performance and cyber security. He explained that, over the last 12 months, there had been two fatalities at nuclear licenced sites which was unprecedented, and several serious injuries and near misses that were all CHS related. MF also advised that the industry needed to take a more strategic focus to cyber security.
   2. Tor Justad (TJ) asked about the workforce shortage across the nuclear industry.
   3. MF noted that skills and capability was an issue for the sector. He referenced the creation of the Nuclear Skills Taskforce (NSTF) noting, in part, this was a result of ONR raising concerns with government about skills and capability across the sector. MF advised that across the civil and defence sectors he sensed that there was now tacit recognition that collaboration was needed to address these issues. He also referenced a report that the head of the NSTF (Sir Simon Bollom) would be delivering to the Prime Minister on this matter shortly, which would highlight what was being done and what further actions will be necessary to address the skills challenge.
   4. TJ noted that nuclear engineers were key to safe operations and asked what the statistics are on current numbers.
   5. MF advised that there were no immediate concerns but that ONR did want to ensure the right people were in the right place to support safe operations. He added that the NSTF work was rightly focusing on two key needs, transferable skills for nuclear and nuclear skills.
   6. David Cullen (DC) commented that the CNI annual report referenced the recent closure of a long standing regulatory issue at Aldermaston and asked for further details. DC also referenced Devonport Royal Dockyard Limited (DRDL) and asked about ONR’s strategic approach to getting both of these sites out of enhanced regulatory attention.
   7. MF explained that ONR had changed its approach to influence performance improvements on the sites. There is now more strategic board level engagement to ensure licensee boards are aware of ONR’s views on performance and standards, and where board members need to provide support to their executive to deliver the required improvements. These have been taking place with Sellafield Ltd, DRDL, and AWE, and have begun to have a positive impact.

In addition, MF advised that the new interim AWE Chief Executive brings a much improved leadership style to AWE, with the added benefit of knowledge of other industry sectors. He also referenced the engagement ONR had been having with Babcock International and noted the changes in recent months to how DRDL was being supported by Babcock. MF also confirmed that ONR had refreshed it’s regulatory team on both sites.

**Action 23.15 – ONR to provide some further details on the close out of the long term regulatory issue referred to in the CNI annual report at AWE Aldermaston.**

**Post meeting note:**

The original Level 1 Regulatory Issue [7493] was raised in March 2019 to track progress against a series of initiatives which aimed to lift AWE Plc out of Enhanced Attention. ONR conducted a formal review of AWE’s progress during Autumn 2020, focusing on governance and internal challenge, at which it concluded that the Burghfield Site had provided evidence of a sustained improvement in safety performance and autonomous behaviour such that ONR was content to place it back at a ‘Routine’ level of regulatory attention.

The Aldermaston site remained at an enhanced level of regulatory attention. This was driven by outstanding concerns in safety performance at the AWE Plc corporate level, the quality of safety documentation, implementation of facility upgrades and management of nuclear liabilities. Regulatory Issue 7493 was consequently superseded by a new Level 1 Regulatory Issue [RI-10506]. ONR conducted a series of targeted interventions throughout 2022 on corporate level internal assurance and challenge, leadership and management for safety and the quality and delivery of key safety outcomes. Aldermaston demonstrated sufficient progress to allow this issue to be closed and for any remaining actions to be monitored under “business as usual”. The remaining concerns regarding capacity and capability are being tracked separately via a new Level 2 Regulatory Issue RI-1175.

* 1. Mike Taylor (MT) expressed concern about ONR’s enabling approach and felt the approach could affect the independence of the organisation and place it into difficulty.
  2. MF assured NGOs that ONR’s enabling approach does not compromise ONR’s independence. He explained that enabling needed to be taken in context, emphasising that it is about taking a constructive approach with dutyholders and other relevant stakeholders to enable effective delivery, but importantly this is done against clear prioritised safety and security outcomes. He was clear that ONR’s outcomes are always about safety, security and safeguards. He reinforced the point that ONR will not hesitate to take enforcement action to bring about required improvements where they are considered necessary.
  3. Katy Attwater (KA) commented that she was pleased to see climate change referenced in the CNI report. KA advised that in her view leaders were bystanders on this issue. KA asked about Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and ONR’s ability to negotiate with government if it wanted to proceed with SMRs that were not feasible.
  4. MF advised that the next CNI themed inspection would focus on climate change and would provide an industry wide view on the nuclear industry’s preparedness to deal with the impacts of climate change.

**Action 23.16 – Seek NGO feedback into the conclusions of the CNI climate change themed inspection report.**

* 1. MF confirmed that government was developing siting criteria that will be used to determine the location of new nuclear sites and advised that ONR was working with government to ensure that the criteria met ONR’s needs and expectations. MF emphasised that if we did not consider it safe to deploy a reactor we would not allow it to happen. He also advised NGO colleagues that the government’s approach to siting will be open to public consultation.
  2. KA commented that societal breakdown was a major concern to NGOs and the potential impact this would have on nuclear sites. MF recognised this as an area of concern and added it was something that ONR recognised needed further consideration following the Covid-19 pandemic, noting ONR would follow this up in due course.
  3. Ian Ralls (IR) asked for further information regarding cyber security concerns.
  4. MF explained the difference between operational and information technology and advised that concerns were principally around information technology. MF advised that ONR wanted to ensure industry understood the cybersecurity threat and risks, was effectively leading on cybersecurity and had sufficient qualified and experienced resources. He added that the ONR team was working with dutyholders to ensure they met our expectations in these areas.
  5. Dr Ruth Balogh (RBa) welcomed ONR’s work on climate change and asked if the forthcoming CNI report would consider emissions generated by the nuclear industry from its use of information technology.
  6. MF responded and confirmed that the CNI themed inspection on climate change would focus on the safety perspective of nuclear licenced sites; he advised that regulation of the greenhouse emissions generated by nuclear sites was not in ONR’s regulatory vires, and noted that this would be a matter for the Environment Agency.

**Action 23.17 – Ensure Environment Agency (Alan McGoff) are made aware of the concern regarding emissions generated from industry’s use of information technology.**

* 1. Prof. Andy Blowers (AB) commented further on the siting criteria and deployment of reactor technologies, in particular the length of time waiting for clarification, and the pronouncement by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on this matter.
  2. MF advised that he had written to the Minister asking for clarity on how the 24GW by 2050 ambition would be delivered and had been promised clarity by the end of the year via the ‘nuclear roadmap’, coincident with the consultation on siting criteria. RG added that ONR has been engaged with DESNZ and that we had been informed that government would be publishing a consultation in December. RG noted that government were encouraging NGOs to participate.
  3. AB advised that NGOs had participated in a consultation six years ago. He asked if the eight sites in place since 2011 would be included in the new list of nominated sites. He also noted that under the current Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process specific sites are not considered. He asked if ONR would be commenting on site suitability and noted the crucial role ONR has.
  4. MF advised his understanding was that the eight sites identified in 2011 would remain on the list. He added that the GDA process itself did not consider site specific issues, but that these would be considered by ONR in its assessment of the Pre-Construction Safety Report (PCSR), before ONR would grant permission for the construction of a specific design at a particular site, which would determine the suitability of the design and site.
  5. Pete Wilkinson (PW) commented that there was a lot of weight on ONR’s shoulders. He asked if ONR had a definition of what ‘safe’ is, and also noted the latest BMA report on cardiovascular disease and low level radiation. JS added that the latter point was not an agenda item for today’s meeting.
  6. MF advised that ONR had clearly defined requirements which are set out in ONR’s Safety Assessment Principles and the Security Assessment Principles.
  7. MF updated on the changes to the ONR board, advising that Mark McAllister, ONR’s current chair, would be stepping down from the role. He advised that a new interim chair will be announced shortly, and that he expected the Department for Work and Pensions to appoint a permanent chair within the next 12 months.
  8. MF updated on the meeting held between ONR and the International Atomic Energy Agency ahead of the next Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission to the UK in January 2024. He also noted the work ONR had been involved in with international partners to look at the harmonisation of certain regulatory activities. In relation to the ‘ethics’ paper that was originally presented by NGOs to the Forum in November 2022, MF advised that ONR had shared it with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and had also shared it with the new chair of the UK’s Health and Safety Regulator’s Network who was keen to discuss it further with the regulatory members of the network. He also confirmed that Peter Burt was due to attend ONR’s March board meeting to present the paper.
  9. MF updated on Geological Disposal, and advised that he had previously written to the NDA asking for clarity on the timescales around the operation of a geological disposal facility (GDF). He confirmed that the NDA had provided assurances that site licence companies had inputted into the timeline dates.
  10. Questions were asked about the lead in time for the construction of a GDF. Concern was also expressed about the timelines and resources and MF was asked how ONR would ensure that the deadlines are met.
  11. MF referenced the recent regulatory scrutiny report[[1]](#footnote-2) published jointly by ONR and the Environment Agency that outlines our regulatory work in relation to geological disposal over the last 12 months. MF confirmed that a GDF would be a licensable activity and would be subject to the same rigorous assessment as any other nuclear facility. He confirmed that ONR was engaged with Nuclear Waste Services (NWS), the developer of a GDF. MF advised that ONR had the expertise in-house to deliver robust regulation of the GDF and this would be developed as required by the programme. TJ asked for further information about the volunteer communities that had expressed an interest in hosting a GDF.

**Action 23.18 – ONR to provide details of the current communities that have expressed an interest in hosting a GDF and share NWS website link**

**Post meeting note**

Four communities have so far expressed an interest in hosting a Geological Disposal Facility, they are: South Copeland, Mid-Copeland, Allerdale all in Cumbria, and Theddlethorpe in Lincolnshire. In September 2023 Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) announced that Allerdale was to be withdrawn from the process after investigations concluded only a limited volume of suitable rock was identifiable and the geology in the area was unlikely to support a post closure safety case.

Further information about the work of NWS and each of the current community partnerships can be found on the following websites:

[https://southcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsouthcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CLydia.bower%40onr.gov.uk%7C83672a74fea14e0279f708dc0dd700f0%7C742775df807748d681d01e82a1f52cb8%7C0%7C0%7C638400464307415344%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LMMLgEzQbVwYD4dexUTReN35OvJCqsSuuJKOXSxqFb8%3D&reserved=0)

[https://midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmidcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CLydia.bower%40onr.gov.uk%7C83672a74fea14e0279f708dc0dd700f0%7C742775df807748d681d01e82a1f52cb8%7C0%7C0%7C638400464307415344%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=O9ptYG3sebzqmyFMp%2FSrsA%2B%2B3u1b%2FP5%2BHnhZ%2FwVmcuc%3D&reserved=0)

[https://theddlethorpe.workinginpartnership.org.uk/](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftheddlethorpe.workinginpartnership.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CLydia.bower%40onr.gov.uk%7C83672a74fea14e0279f708dc0dd700f0%7C742775df807748d681d01e82a1f52cb8%7C0%7C0%7C638400464307415344%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ApwhlFEk02Lr%2BrnsbDIZohqLzF9uyWAutaCaZes3YHc%3D&reserved=0)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nuclear-waste-services](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Forganisations%2Fnuclear-waste-services&data=05%7C02%7CLydia.bower%40onr.gov.uk%7C83672a74fea14e0279f708dc0dd700f0%7C742775df807748d681d01e82a1f52cb8%7C0%7C0%7C638400464307571607%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Ts3Gza2R%2FNU6OrdYRSTg7319ya9I43vgvvhQa71MOgs%3D&reserved=0)

* 1. MF updated on the recent flooding that had affected the Rolls-Royce Raynesway site. He advised that there had been a significant rise in the river level and that previous improvements that had been made to the flood defences had been effective. He noted the decision by Rolls-Royce to shutdown certain activities when the flooding occurred. MF confirmed that ONR had agreed with the approach taken by Rolls-Royce.
  2. PB commented on the extensive building work at the Rolls Royce Raynesway site and asked about the implications of that. MF confirmed that ONR is aware of the potential expansion plans for the Derby site and is in regular engagement with Rolls Royce regarding its plans. He provided assurance that ONR would maintain close oversight and scrutiny to ensure continued safety on the site, and that facilities would not be expanded without appropriate ONR oversight and approval.
  3. In relation to the proposed Sizewell C (SZC) development, MF confirmed that ONR was continuing to consider site specific issues, including risks to the site from extreme weather events.
  4. Paul Collins (PC) commented that the proposed sea defence would have a major impact on long shore drift. He queried who would have the final decision if ONR, Environment Agency and local authority could not agree.
  5. MF advised that ONR and the Environment Agency work closely together, and that if there were issues with the local authority we/ONR would need to arrange trilateral meetings. He emphasised that ONR does not work in isolation and works with relevant stakeholder organisations to achieve an agreed position.
  6. PC commented that ONR did not appear to be involved with the Marine Technical Forum, and expressed a view that this was a substantial piece of work. He also asked if the SZC site licence could be granted if funding was not in place.
  7. MF advised that the expertise sits with others, but emphasised that ONR would consider safety implications of any changes requested. He confirmed that ONR had yet to make a decision on site specific aspects of the SZC design. He also noted that there were a number of issues to be resolved before ONR could consider granting a site licence.
  8. MT expressed concern about the size of the proposed Sizewell C site. He noted it was a 27 hectare site and was concerned it was not big enough, that there was no room for error and questioned the impact on the Sizewell B site. He also raised a query regarding water supply, and expressed the view that the site was likely to need a desalination plant.
  9. MF advised that ONR was looking carefully at the licence application. Site specific matters are being discussed with NNB GenCo SZC and ONR will only grant permission to commence construction, which is separate to granting a nuclear site licence, once it is satisfied with the safety and security of the design for the Sizewell C site. EDF and NNB GenCo will also consider potential impacts on Sizewell B, which ONR will assess.

**Action 23.19 – ONR to update Forum once there is further information to share regarding the site licence application.**

1. Update on HPC construction, SZC, Taishan and GDA activities
   1. Shane Turner (ST), ONR Superintending Inspector, commenced by providing an update on the Hinkley Point C (HPC) development. He noted that the project was at peak civil engineering and will move into a significant equipment and systems installation period and start of early commissioning phase in the next year.
   2. ST advised that key areas of ONR focus were: nuclear site health and safety; quality of construction, manufactured components, and installation activities; project readiness for the next phases including changes in risk profile; and delivering an inspection programme, focused on matters that are novel, complex, higher risk and/or based on intelligence.
   3. ST confirmed that over the coming months ONR expected to consider the permissioning of: unit 1 containment dome lift; release of first steam generators from the factory in France; installation of unit 1 reactor pressure vessel; and start of early commissioning.
   4. ST moved to update on regulatory activities concerning SZC. He confirmed that the nuclear site licence assessment was ongoing, and that ONR was aiming to make a decision by the end of April 2024.
   5. ST noted that ONR was still considering a number of key matters, including: resolution of shareholder agreement constraints and project governance; security of land tenure over the site; further development of the applicant’s organisational structure and capability; further site and hazard characterisation studies; development of emergency arrangements; and establishment of arrangements for compliance with licence conditions and other statutory requirements (e.g. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015). He noted that ONR was also overseeing ground preparation and early engineering design activities and will also oversee the activities on site if a nuclear site licence was to be granted.
   6. ST updated on issues with the EPR reactor in Taishan. He noted that fuel rod clad failures were initially detected in Taishan unit 1 during cycle 2. A number of phenomena have been observed which included fuel rod clad failures, coolant flow rate fluctuations, clad oxidation and fuel assembly grid wear.
   7. ST updated on the current status of the three EPR reactors currently operating worldwide. He advised that in Taishan unit 1 had been in outage since the end of January and unit 2 was currently operating in its third cycle. He also confirmed that in Olkiluoto (Finland) the EPR reactor had started commercial operation in mid-April 2023.
   8. ST provided further details on the EPR fuel and core experience that affected Taishan unit 1. He noted that ONR is continuing its engagement with other nuclear regulators about this matter and that ONR was also having regular engagement with NNB on its response to the Taishan fuel and core experience.
   9. He confirmed that there is now a good understanding of the direct causes of the phenomena and that proposals have been made by NNB to modify the fuel assembly design, which would be resistant to the direct causes of the fuel failures (radiation induced stress corrosion cracking of the fuel assembly grid springs). He confirmed that other options are being explored, including for example a flow distribution device, to address the flow rate fluctuations, but advised that no decision had yet been made about whether further modifications are needed or within what timescale. ST explained that ONR is confident NNB understands and is adequately addressing the operational experience, and a suitable safety justification can be made.
   10. ST confirmed that ONR would continue to engage with other regulators and NNB. He advised that NNB were producing a safety case to justify fuel assembly modifications before the start of fuel assembly manufacturing, which will be subject to detailed assessment by ONR’s specialist inspectors. He confirmed that fuel delivery to site and fuel load will be subject to formal permissioning by ONR. He noted that as part of our permissioning activities we will focus on ensuring that NNB has fully understood all the Taishan fuel and core operational experience, any necessary modifications have been implemented, and that the safety case clearly demonstrates the reactor is safe to operate.
   11. ST also provided an update on current Generic Design Assessment (GDA) activities. He confirmed that ONR was assessing the Rolls-Royce SMR design and advised that ONR expected to complete step two in summer 2024.
   12. He updated on the Great British Nuclear (GBN) competition which was aiming to identify which SMR technologies the UK Government should support the development of. He confirmed the list of six companies recently announced which included Rolls-Royce SMR, Holtec, GE Hitachi, Westinghouse, NuScale and EDF. ST explained that GBN is running a selection process to identify a smaller subset of the six that it would support with funding to take their designs forward. ST noted that GBN is expected to identify specific sites for the selected SMR technologies.
   13. ST confirmed that ONR is anticipating commencing two further GDAs and explained that requesting party funding for these GDAs is dependent on the outcome of the government’s Future Nuclear Enabling Fund (FNEF) competition. He advised that we were not able to confirm these technologies until the FNEF process has completed.
   14. Alison Downes (AD) asked about the reasons why Taishan 1 was offline earlier this year. AD expressed the view that NNB seemed to be addressing issues but not the causes. AD also asked for clarification on the status of the Olkiluoto 3 reactor and whether it was operating normally.
   15. ST responded and advised that the Olkiluoto 3 reactor was operating normally. He confirmed that during the period that Taishan unit 1 was offline no new phenomena had been identified. He advised that ONR was expecting NNB to submit a justification to modify the fuel design which ONR would assess. ST explained that the issue of flow distribution was going to take some time to consider. He confirmed that ONR would be engaging with other regulators, and noted this was a significant piece of work, but it was an area we’d be looking at closely. ST advised that with or without a flow distribution device, NNB will need to justify that the reactor is safe to operate.
   16. Peter Banks (PBan) asked if GBN would identify sites for selected technologies. MF advised that GBN was running the SMR competition and government was developing siting criteria, which would be used to identify sites for reactor deployment.
   17. TJ noted that the Olkiluoto reactor was 14 years behind schedule. He questioned how nuclear power could be justified given the costs and delays and expressed the view that renewables would be much cheaper than nuclear.
   18. MF confirmed that ONR was focused on safety, security and safeguards and that cost was a matter for government. ST added that HPC and SZC would benefit from not being the first EPR and should learn from the experiences at the earlier EPRs.
   19. IR expressed concern at the fundamental design problems and flaws with the EPR.
   20. ST advised that a key focus for ONR was ensuring that NNB understand the issues so that it doesn’t happen again. MF added that with any first of a kind reactor there are likely to be some teething issues, but emphasised that because the reactor design was not yet operational in the UK, we have the benefit of learning from others to ensure issues experienced elsewhere are addressed through design modifications and don’t happen at HPC or SZC.
   21. PB asked if ONR was looking at the future arrangements for fuel manufacture. ST confirmed that ONR plans to inspect the fuel manufacturer.
   22. Questions were asked about the SMR competition and it was noted by NGOs that NuScale was on the list despite the company ceasing trading. MF advised that GBN were running the competition and that we expect to find out the results next year; as part of the process GBN will consider the financial viability of vendor organisations.
   23. Chris Wilson (CW) noted that NNB had submitted updated documents for the SZC sea defences which had a design life only up to 2120. CW queried this and noted that spent fuel would still be on site beyond 2120.
   24. ST confirmed that ONR’s focus would be on ensuring the site is protected. He advised that, if SZC is constructed, the site would be subject to a periodic review of safety every 10 years to ensure it was safe. CW responded that this seemed to be ‘kicking the can down the road’ and he queried why agree a design life to 2120.

**Action 23.20 – ST to provide the Forum with the SZC spent fuel strategy when it is agreed.**

**Post meeting note**

The current strategy is essentially unchanged from that submitted as part of the DCO, which is that fuel is stored in the fuel ponds for about 10 years (wet storage), until cool enough to be packaged in canisters for dry fuel storage. The canisters are then stored in the Interim Spent Fuel Store on site (dry storage) until cooled sufficiently to be repackaged for sending to a GDF and until the GDF is available.

* 1. PC, noting that a damper was fitted on the Olkiluoto EPR, asked if dampers were fitted on other EPRs and also asked for clarification on how many more SMRs are expected to join the GDA process.
  2. MF advised that two further SMR designs are expected to enter the GDA process shortly. ST added that a damper is fitted in Taishan and Flamanville 3 and is proposed at HPC, which will be scrutinised by ONR.
  3. In relation to ONR’s site licensing guidance, MT raised concerns about SZC and the proposed funding for decommissioning and waste management and emergency arrangements.
  4. ST advised that ONR is following its regulatory guidance to help inform the decision on the SZC site licensing application. He confirmed that ONR was still looking at emergency arrangements and that this would be assessed before making a decision regarding whether to grant a nuclear site licence. He added that there would need to be adequate onsite and offsite emergency plans that took into account Sizewell B and Sizewell C.

1. Update on recently concluded climate change workshops
   1. RG thanked all of those who had been involved in the three climate change workshops held earlier this year. Particular thanks were expressed to Katy Attwater for her work on behalf of the NGO community to help deliver these events. RG advised that a summary report from the facilitators is expected shortly which ONR and NGOs will then need to review and consider.
   2. KA commented that further discussion was now needed on how to develop and move forward with this work. KA added that future workshop projects could focus on exploring ONR’s role in influencing government decisions, societal breakdown and subsequent implications on nuclear industry of that. KA also noted that there was a strong feeling from SZC NGOs to have more liaison with ONR. KA thanked MF for ‘plugging’ into the process, and expressed a view that ‘listening’ between ONR and NGOs had improved.
   3. AB commented that the workshops had provided good dialogue and interaction. He was now waiting to see the report and felt there had been some interesting ideas for future discussion, such as societal breakdown. He expressed the view that participation does require a lot of preparation.
   4. PB expressed thanks to RG and KA for their work in taking the workshops forward. PB added that if the process is to ‘bear fruit’, NGOs needed to see some change in the position/policy of ONR.
   5. MF thanked all for their feedback and noted that the workshops had exceeded expectations. He noted points made by PB, and advised that ONR would now consider the report and the way forward.
2. Update on ONR’s strategy 2025-2030 – how can NGOs get involved?
   1. RG advised that ONR’s current strategy runs to 2025 and that we were now starting to look at our next strategy. RG confirmed that it would go out to a public consultation nearer the time, but emphasised that ONR would appreciate the perspective of the ONR NGO community and would provide further details in due course.
3. New ONR website – NGO user feedback request
   1. RG confirmed that ONR was looking to launch a new website in the New Year. She explained that the new website will be more accessible and is part of our commitment to ensuring ONR is open and transparent. RG advised that ONR would welcome NGO feedback on the new website design, and asked if anyone was interested in providing feedback to get in touch with her. PB requested that ONR did not lose its archived information on the website. RG assured PB that the content mentioned would remain as the aim of the new website was not to reduce the content on the site but to make it more accessible.
4. Summary and Close
   1. RG and JS thanked everyone for their time and participation in the meeting and wished everyone well.

Meeting closed at 12:15.

1. ## Regulatory scrutiny and engagement for geological disposal: annual report 2022 to 2023 ([Geological disposal: scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services' work - annual reports - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/geological-disposal-scrutiny-of-rwms-work-annual-reports))

   [↑](#footnote-ref-2)