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| NDA Business Planning,Business Plan Consultation,Nuclear Decommissioning Authority,Herdus House,Westlakes Science and Technology Park,Moor Row, Cumbria, CA24 3HUEmail: businessplanning@nda.gov.uk 24 April 2025 | Redgrave CourtMerton Road Bootle Merseyside L20 7HS Contact@onr.gov.ukUnique ref: 2025/15505 |

To whom it may concern

**Consultation Response - NDA Draft Business Plan 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028**

The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) retains a significant interest in the successful delivery of the NDA’s mission. This includes the activities of the NDA, its site licence companies and supply chain, which contribute to significant hazard and risk reductions, and to the achievement of important safety, security and nuclear safeguards improvements across the NDA’s estate. I am pleased to provide comments on the NDA’s Draft Business Plan as a statutory consultee under Schedule 3 to the Energy Act 2004covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

**Context**

I note the NDA Chief Executive’s comments regarding “*…The government process to agree funds for the following years has not yet concluded. We expect to have more certainty about our funding levels for the subsequent three to four years in the summer, following the conclusion of the Government’s current spending review…”.*

I am pleased to highlight that the Business Plan for the Directorate[[1]](#footnote-2) I lead was recently finalised. It takes full account of the NDA funding settlement outcomes to date. We will maintain the close contact with the NDA, at all levels, government and other parties, to ensure that my directorate’s planned regulatory oversight remains aligned with the NDA Business Plan and spending review final outcomes.

**Comments**

I note the NDA Chief Executive’s comments regarding the necessity of “… *appropriate assumptions to enable us to produce this Business Plan….”*

The three-year Business Plan does provide a clear outline of the significant amount of important work needed to deliver the NDA’s mission together with appropriate caveats about funding alongside commitments to the maintenance of regulatory compliance.

I also note that the near-term activities are mapped against your strategic themes and specifically to the 47 strategic outcomes that make up our mission. These activities broadly reflect the activities I, and my team, had anticipated given our ongoing strategic and regulatory contacts with the NDA, and site licence companies, in the context of the funding settlement outcomes to date.

Whilst most of the activities reflect a timeframe that spans the period of 2025-28, I and my team note that there are no interim milestones for strategic objectives, where the end point for an activity is decades away. Inclusion of such milestones would assist mine, and my senior teams, understanding of how targeting near-term objectives support these longer-term goals.

I suggest that it may be beneficial for NDA to consider whether, and how, the key activities in the NDA Business could be related to the NDA’s five strategic themes for delivery of the NDA’s mission. Such an approach would align with the approach of my own Directorate’s strategies and plans which have been pared down to maintain a direct ‘line of sight’ between activities that deliver on key priorities, and the my Directorate’s mission. A similar approach in the NDA business plan would enhance mine, and my teams, ability to track and consider our regulatory posture in response to changes on the ground in the delivery of the NDA strategy and/or business plans.

These comments are intended to acknowledge the constraints and challenges for the NDA estate together with my desire for our respective organisation’s responses to those challenges to be optimised. I and my team would be very pleased to discuss them with NDA opposite numbers in more detail as necessary.

Yours sincerely



**Paul Dicks**

Director of Regulation – Sellafield, Decommissioning, Fuel and Waste Division

1. [Sellafield, decommissioning, fuel and waste | Office for Nuclear Regulation](https://www.onr.org.uk/our-work/what-we-regulate/sellafield-decommissioning-fuel-and-waste/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)