

SME Steering Group - Cumbria

Meeting 8 – 10.00am 3 July 2014, NDA, Herdus House, Moor Row

MINUTES

Attendees

SMEs: Chair: Kurt Canfield (KC), Safety Critical Peter Woolaghan (PW), React Engineering Ian Park (IP), Park Gate Tom Anderson (TA), Blue Stream Consulting Mike Nichols (MN), PacTec Howard Dixon (HD), Reel UK - Guest	Tier 2s: Alex Cropper (AC), Carillion Scott Duff, (SD) MITIE Paul Fletcher (PF), Amec - Guest Support Organisations: John Porter (JP) BEC
SLCs: Robert Astall (RA), Sellafield Limited	NDA: Sam Dancy (SD) Chris Jennings (CJ) Pippa Kelly (PK)
Apologies: Andy Hooper (AH) Westlakes Engineering Ron Gorham (RG), NDA	
Jeanette Medati (JM), BAE Systems Sarah Mitchell (SM), Copeland BC	

1) Apologies, Introductions and Minutes from previous meeting

John Porter was representing David Jones from BEC and Alex Cropper on behalf of Kevin Thompson of Carillion. Two guest speakers were introduced, Paul Fletcher from Amec and Howard Dixon from Reel UK.

2) Outstanding Actions Points from previous meetings

See updated log.

Additional points rose during these discussions:

Action: Chris Stanger, LLWR will be invited to present at the next meeting

Action: NDA Insurance Briefing note needs to be more 'official' for use with Insurance Brokers

Action: PK to invite Kirsty Snape to update the next meeting on further discussions with Willis.

Action: Amec seeing an increase in T&C's including Nuclear Liability. PF to send further details to SD and RA for investigation

Action: 5000 free places for electronic Triple Bar training have been offered can it be confirmed that these are not restricted to Magnox sites only. SD to confirm with Natasha Hansen.

3) Focus areas for Committee

- a) Training
- b) Commercial Barriers
- c) Identifying Cumbrian SME's in the supply chain
- d) Export

Training

Following action point 7.10 from previous meeting the following barriers to training were raised:

- Is the industry ready to accept the number of apprentices planned to be trained? SLC's and Tier 2's are prepared but is there a missed opportunity for SME's?
- SQEP capable staff requirements from SLC's and Tier 2's rather than solution driven contracts.
- Concern that there is a lack of interest in young people to even consider associated industries during school, need to get more children interested before the apprentice stage.

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Key points for the committee's consideration from this discussion are : Motivation, Traction, exciting environment for inspiration, Business opportunities, solution driven not resource driven, open minded for intelligent solutions, initiatives for Mentors, socio economics.

Commercial Barriers – see point later

Identify new SME's – one of the purposes of the Cumbrian Excellence Day

Export – not currently a main area of focus for the group

Action : SD to investigate further into the Institute of Export

UKTI holding workshops the day following the NDA Supply Chain Event on 6th Nov

Experience shows that a product is easier to export than services and experience with Sellafield carries considerable weight when applying for work overseas.

Outstanding action : RG to contact INS to present to meeting.

BEC were in discussion previously with DECC, NNL and NDA over the opportunity to create a remote handling and hot test facilities. With the emergence of the new Centre of Excellence this idea should be revisited.

Action : RA to speak to Neil Smart to get an update on the current status of hot test facilities for R&D at SL.

CJ updated the group on the proposed new EU Procurement legislation changing in April 2015 which will allow greater use of dynamic purchasing systems.

4) New Challenges/Barriers/LFE/Contract Structures

- BEC still has concerns that some Tier 2's have no intention to use SME's as the funds are too limited.
- Security issues - concern was the cancellation of P4 passes at the end of a contract where a follow up contract may be started shortly after, causing the contractor to have to apply for a new P4 pass and the inevitable delays.

Action : RA to discuss with the SL Security Manager what are the issues that cause him delays in processing applications in order to raise their profile.

- Expectation that SMEs would raise issues on payment difficulties (from SL and Tier 2's) where in practice they may feel this would create a threat to future business from not only their customer but also from the bank. Further investigation into the causes of delays could provide solutions to prevent future issues (early engagement, SME education of full requirements to complete payment etc, possibly payments milestones –Tier 2's and SL). Focus with procurement and contract managers on raising the issue with the Supply Chain.

Action : PF to look at current o/s payments on invoices and feedback.

- Contract Structures – an unintentional consequence of a minimum performance standard in the previous NMP/NDA contract created a barrier to sole source contracts. Request from Supply Chain to ensure that this is considered in the next contract.

Action : SD to speak to Claire Maxwell Smith and Peter Lutwyche about sole sourcing and the Supply chain.

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5) Feedback from National Committee/Chairs

No National meeting held since April. Chairs of the other Steering Groups have held telecons recently and some are struggling with attendance.

Scottish group are supporting Scottish Enterprise who have received funding for a new Nuclear Supply Chain project.

Southern and Welsh group are focusing on the opportunities of the New Build in the region

Northern Group have held an SME Day to capture information on local SME's, their needs and give them the opportunity to feed into the committee. Also working on a collaboration booklet for launch by November at the NDA Supply Chain Event.

Coordinating concerns between the groups particularly with regard to SL – an ongoing process following the meeting between NDA, SL and Steering Groups.

6) Feedback from other Committees : CoNE (Centre of Nuclear Excellence) , CEC (Cumbria Excellence Committee) and SSCFG (SME Supply Chain Focus Group)

CoNE is a dynamic meeting of 4 SLC's part of the group, BAe, Nugen, Sellafield and LLWR and also includes SME, Universities, councils – but no politicians, to create an environment to meet all of the local nuclear needs. BEC's responsibilities are being transferred over time to the LEP.

Cumbria Excellence Day – good feedback, 69 companies exhibiting, lack of Tier 2 attendance.

SSCFG – lively meeting looking at the skills gap, missing focus on the experience and knowledge gap.

7) Guest Speaker – Howard Dixon, Reel UK

Howard gave his views on the viability of starting as an SME in the Decommissioning market in the region and the difficulties that could be encountered.

8) Guest Speaker – Paul Fletcher, AMEC

Paul did not give the intended presentation but instead spoke about a new initiative AMEC are planning with SME's. Unfortunately he was unable to give any detail as it is part of the initiatives being put forward in a bid. Once the contracts (BEP and DDP) are announced, if AMEC are successful, he urges SME's to come forward and speak to them about the opportunities that may be available. AMEC also have four employees (2 directors) who are supporting the SME agenda as Mentors in the NDA Mentor Scheme. The company are also providing internal training or secondment for Magnox staff to benefit from Tier 2 experience and has been extended to other organisations.

Also AMEC have offered the opportunity to use their highly equipped research laboratories in Birchwood, Warrington to give businesses access to equipment that would otherwise be too expensive to access.

Further opportunities are available within AMEC's frameworks with LLWR and Capenhurst, as well as the above mentioned BEP and DDP). Despite being involved in many of the local meetings of organisations, Procurement Dept has not had any direct contact from SME's asking about opportunities, giving feedback etc. Carillion have a different experience with many contacts coming to Supply Chain Managers and buyers in the procurement offices.

9) Terms of Reference – Appointments

Action : PK to add new Terms of Reference to the National Steering Group meeting and NDA Website

Mike Nichols, Pactec has volunteered to be the Deputy Chair for the Steering Group.

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10) AOB

BEC :

BIS have announced a National Nuclear College, no decision on where it will be based but BEC obviously hope it will be in West Cumbria to link in and utilise the Dalton Institute, Gen II, the Construction Centre and UTC. NIC will make the final decision soon but any letters of support from local interested parties would be very welcome and should be sent via John Porter at BEC(jep@porters1.demon.co.uk) or Mike Smith at Gen II.

Action : KC to send a letter of support from the SME Steering Group for all to sign and forward to John Porter/Mike Smith.

A Supply Chain retention survey was conducted 2 years ago and a reworked version is planned this Autumn with the aid of Sellafield. It will be divided into 2 parts, 1) SME's upwards approached to find out how much work is available, including a qualitative section, 2) to look at definitions and data from SL on SME spend can be validated.

DSA/ISA supplier days to be held this autumn with access to the Business Managers and Technical Managers. Info to be available through Steering Group and BEC website.

Fab Lab will be having a robot challenge this autumn and are looking for companies to get involved with local schools to support the challenge. Any interested companies, please contact danny.frost@britainsenergycoast.co.uk

Sellafield : well attended Supplier Forum held last month, promoting the SME Agenda and Socio Economic themes.

SME Procurement plan is live on the Sellafield System.

NDA Supply Chain Event to be held on 6th November in Event City. For more information please see the NDA website, Linked In etc.

Supply Chain Awards also being launched and available on the NDA website at the same time. Please consider whether you or a company you know are eligible to enter.

11) Dates for next meetings

Next meeting scheduled for 14th October at React offices, Moor Row