

**CoRWM WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE END OF QUARTER ONE 2015-16****Secretariat**

1. This is a report of the Committee's delivery against the CoRWM 2015-18 Work Programme (CoRWM doc.3198) at the end of quarter one of the financial year 2015-16.

***Summary of CoRWM's Activities During Quarter One 2015-16***

2. The majority of the Committee's time during the period from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 was spent providing advice to DECC on the Work Packages arising from the White Paper "Implementing Geological Disposal". This was done through meetings and correspondence and wider discussions with DECC officials, stakeholders, and other radioactive waste management organisations.
3. In addition, spent some time on the preparation of its Annual Report to Ministers. Members of CoRWM also attended a number of meetings as part of their scrutiny role, The key meetings attended are summarised below:

*i. UK-Germany meeting, 28<sup>th</sup> April, Bonn*

CoRWM Members Professor Simon Harley and Professor Rebecca Lunn attended a Germany-UK joint meeting on developments in GDF siting programmes at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) in Bonn. The UK delegation included representatives from DECC, Radioactive Waste Management (RWM), the regulators and CoRWM. The German delegation comprised delegates from BMUB and ESK, the Entsorgungskommission (German Waste Management Commission).

Following an outline of the purpose of the meeting and an overview of the history of the German experience leading to the 2013 Site Selection Act, DECC and the UK Regulators provided an update on UK's Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process. RWM presented on the technical work programme to support early stages of GDF siting. Professor Harley presented on the role of CoRWM and key issues in GDF Siting in the UK context.

The German delegation presented on the 2013 German Site Selection Act (BMUB), explaining their new approach involving public participation, a blank canvas for screening in Germany (their 'white map'), and the idea of the 'Containment Providing Rock Zone' (CPRZ) developed for a salt-hosted GDF and to be extended in application to other host rocks. An update on the current status of site selection in Germany was presented, including the challenges of starting again with a blank or 'white' map. There followed a group of three technical presentations on behalf of

ESK, on the key features and safety issues of salt, crystalline rocks, and argillaceous rocks respectively as host geologies for a GDF.

Discussion sessions were held between each presentation. The UK presentations prompted questions on voluntarism, safety concepts, national geological screening (in particular the meaning of screening in the new UK process), and regulatory frameworks. Corm's role of scrutiny was highlighted as this is rather different to the proposals under development in the new siting process in Germany.

The German presentations prompted discussions on the use of public engagement and role, if any, of voluntarism, the 'containment providing rock zone' model, the concept of no transfer of radionuclides inherent in the CPRZ concept and how this could apply to crystalline rock, and specific issues related to the use of salt as a host material.

The meeting facilitated excellent information exchange on conceptual, strategic and technical matters relating to radioactive waste disposal in Germany and the UK. It also highlighted for each country a number of aspects that require clarification and further explanation as the respective processes develop.

ii. *Radioactive Waste Management Ltd. (RWM) Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)*

CoRWM observed the 10<sup>th</sup> TAP meeting on the 26-27<sup>th</sup> May. RWM updated TAP on its recent work in relation to the GDF programme, and presented its responses to the recommendations arising from the 9<sup>th</sup> TAP meeting.

A number of topics defined from previous TAP meetings were discussed. These included National Geological Screening, the RWM data models and compliance project, high level requirements for the GDF programme and disposal system, and plans for updating the RWM Disposal System Safety Case.

Professor Harley was only able to observe day one of the meeting. He observed that TAP continues to provide very insightful and considered challenge to RWM on all areas of its activity associated with the GDF programme. He also noted that the recommendations produced from the TAP meetings concerning matters on which CoRWM provides advice to DECC are consistent with that advice and are acted on by RWM.

iii. *Scottish Nuclear Sites Meeting*

On 14<sup>th</sup> May John Rennilson attended the twice-yearly Scottish Nuclear Sites Meeting. These meetings aim to:

- enable two way engagement between Scottish Government and stakeholders on issues which affect the nuclear sector; and

- provide a forum to facilitate discussion of cross-Scotland issues and information sharing for site operators, site stakeholder groups and other stakeholders.

CoRWM considers these to be valuable meetings for all concerned as they bring the NDA and site representatives from Chapelcross, Dounreay, Hunterston, Torness and the Ministry of Defence together with SEPA, local community representatives, the overarching Scottish Councils' Committee on Radioactive Substances and Scottish Government officials. There are no CoRWM papers relating to these meetings as Scottish Government produce minutes for all participants. CoRWM expressed its intention to attend the next meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> November.

iv. Advisory Bodies to Government (ABG) Meeting

The Chair and Professor Clark attended the ABG meeting in Berlin on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The ABG meeting enables the Chairs of advisory committees radioactive waste geological disposal in OECD countries to meet and discuss progress. CoRWM along with representatives of other advisory bodies from the US, France, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany gave updates on their work, and important events since the last ABG meeting. The next ABG meeting will be held in December 2016.

The Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) also updated the attendees on the OECD international initiative on the preservation of records across generations. This involves an international cooperative scheme between radioactive waste management agencies of many countries, including the UK.

v. Independent Review Panel (IRP) Public Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> June, London

CoRWM observed this meeting in public of the IRP and RWM, held at the conclusion of the IRP's initial work. The objectives were to clarify the IRP's comments to RWM and to confirm a way forward for geological screening.

The meeting began with a short presentation from RWM, followed by 90 minutes discussion between RWM and the IRP and then 30 minutes public questions.

RWM explained that screening would be based around five attributes- rock type, rock structure, groundwater, natural processes and resources. In discussion with the IRP, RWM made clear that they recognise the overriding importance of safety, with geological considerations being contributory to that. The stated intention is for BGS to produce maps and data and for RWM to produce the narratives, which in RWM's view are more important than the maps. RWM acknowledged the need to convey geological uncertainty and recognise the challenge of doing so. RWM also stated the need to identify clearly what was interpretation or judgement.

The meeting concluded with questions from the public. It was recorded and is available on Youtube.

4. Progress against each of CoRWM's tasks as set out in the Work Programme 2015-16 (doc. 3198) is detailed below.

***Task 1 – GDF Siting Policy: To provide advice to DECC on the Work Packages arising from the White Paper “Implementing Geological Disposal”.***

***Task 1a: Provide advice to DECC on Work Package 1 – National Geological Screening.***

5. CoRWM monitored progress with the National Geological Screening Guidance.

***Task 1b: Provide advice to DECC on Work Package 2 – Working with Communities.***

6. Two CoRWM Members observed meetings of the Community Representative Working Group (CRWG) on the 16<sup>th</sup> April and 11<sup>th</sup> June. As observers of CRWG one element of the process being scrutinised is the communications and Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE) strategy.
7. Oral feedback of CRWG meetings has also been given to DECC between CRWG meetings to advise and comment on the Group's progress.

***Task 1c: Provide advice to DECC on Work Package 3 – Developing Land Use Planning Processes.***

8. CoRWM did not undertake any work on this task in Quarter 1.

***Task 1d: Provide advice to DECC on Work Package 4 – Developer and Lead Communications and Engagement.***

9. Two meetings were held between representatives of the developer, Radioactive Waste Management Ltd (RWM), members of CoRWM, and representatives of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) on 15<sup>th</sup> April, and 7<sup>th</sup> July.
10. The first meeting was a briefing meeting, for RWM to inform CoRWM of its Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plans. RWM also spoke of its approach to coordinating with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and DECC on wider communications and engagement strategies.

11. The second meeting discussed the evolving strategy, and the emphasis being placed on setting up a series of informal stakeholder events to gather views on the National Geological Screening Guidance consultation.

**Task 1e: Provide advice to DECC on Work Package 5 – Regulation (Providing ONR with the legal vires to licence a GDF).**

12. CoRWM did not undertake any work on this task in Quarter 1.

***Task 2 – Welsh Policy: To provide advice to the Welsh Government on its Review of Radioactive Waste Policy in respect of HAW.***

**Task 2a: Provide advice to Welsh Government on proposals.**

13. In April 2015, the Welsh Sub-Group provided advice to Welsh Government on questions posed by the response to its consultation on HAW policy. The revised policy of geological disposal for the management of HAW was announced in May and a public consultation on “Geological Disposal of Higher Activity Radioactive Waste: Community Engagement and Implementation Processes” commenced. CoRWM intend to submit a response to this consultation.

**Task 2b: Scrutinise Welsh Government Consultation and its analysis to inform changes to policy.**

14. Welsh policy for the management of HAW has been reviewed by the Welsh Sub-Group.

***Task 3 – Scottish Government: Review the arrangements for implementing the Scottish Government Policy for managing higher activity radioactive waste.***

**Task 3a: Input to and review the process for developing a Strategy for implementing the Scottish Government Policy for managing higher activity radioactive waste.**

15. Scottish Government issued a Consultation Draft of an Implementation Strategy (IS) for Scotland's Policy on Higher Activity Radioactive Waste on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015. CoRWM produced a response to this consultation, and one member of CoRWM attended a Project Board meeting where the responses were considered.

**Task 3b: Monitor the management of higher activity radioactive waste in Scotland.**

16. Work in relation to this task is covered in Paragraph 3 (iv).

***Task 4 – Interim Surface Storage: Review of the current status of interim storage of radioactive waste, spent fuel and other nuclear materials in the UK and the implications for the GDF.***

***Task 4a: Review the current status of interim storage of radioactive waste, spent fuel and nuclear materials in the UK.***

17. CoRWM prepared a draft note of an update meeting with the NDA in March with the intention of making it publicly available as soon as possible.

***Task 4b: Review plans for retrieval of wastes from legacy ponds and silos at Sellafield.***

18. CoRWM did not undertake any work on this task in Quarter 1.

***Task 5 – Safety Case Development: Review the RWM programme for the development of the 3 generic safety cases and their plans for the transition to site-specific safety cases.***

***Task 5a: Provide advice to DECC on the RWM Generic GDF Safety Case approach.***

19. Input to the 2014-15 Annual Report was drafted and reviewed.

***Task 5b: Produce a clear and consistent understanding of the terminology used for safety cases.***

20. CoRWM did not undertake any work on this task in Quarter 1.

***Task 6 – CoRWM Outreach: Provide effective engagement with the public and other stakeholders to raise the profiles of CoRWM and help inspire confidence in its work.***

***Task 6a: Representation of CoRWM at external events and conferences, issue of e-bulletins, and maintain the website.***

21. As previously noted in Paragraph 3 (iii), representatives of CoRWM attended the Organisation for Economic Co-ordination and Development Nuclear Energy Agency's international Advisory Bodies to Government Meeting in Berlin in May.