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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT THE WATERSIDE HOTEL, ARDROSSAN ROAD, WEST KILBRIDE, KA23 9NG
THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Attendance/Apologies list

Attendance

Ms Rita Holmes	Fairlie CC (Chair)
Mr Stuart McGhie	EDF (Vice Chair)
Mr John Lamb	West Kilbride CC
Mr Stewart McKenzie	North Ayrshire Council

Operators and Officers

Mr Mark Blackley	NRS (Site Director, Hunterston A)
Mr Joe Struthers	EDF (Station Director)
Mr Daniel Smith	Plant Manager (Hunterston B)
Mr Richard Gibson	Engineering Manager (Hunterston A)
Ms Fiona McCall	Senior External Affairs Manager, EDF
Mr Keith Hammond	SEPA (Site Inspector, Hunterston B)
Ms Melanie Hayes	SEPA (Site Inspector, Hunterston A)
Ms Diane Hamilton	Scottish Government
Mr Bill Hamilton	External Affairs Director, NRS
Ms Cath Pritchard	NRS
Ms Mair Jones	NRS
Ms Claire Aitken	NRS
Mr Alastair Walker	NRS
Mr Colin Hargreaves	NRS Site Inspector
Mr David Wallace	NDA (Stakeholder Lead Scotland)
Mr Steve Saunders	ONR (Site Inspector, Hunterston B)
Mr Geoffrey Dore	Minute taker

In Attendance

Mr Alan Holden	Member of Public
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Apologies

Ms Aileen Craig	North Ayrshire Council
Mr Peter Hughes	ONR (Site Inspector, Hunterston A)
Ms Lesley Jeffery	Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT)
Cllr Tom Marshall	North Ayrshire Council
Mr John McHenery	Hunterston Estate
Mr Ian Murdoch	North Ayrshire Council
Mr Jamie Woodburn	Largs CC
Louise Kirk	North Ayrshire Council

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1. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair opened the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves. Apologies were noted from Aileen Craig, Peter Hughes, Lesley Jeffery, Cllr Tom Marshall, John McHenry, Ian Murdoch and Jamie Woodburn.

No interests were declared.

2. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR UPDATES AND CORRESPONDENCE

There was no update.

3. ACTIONS AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Joe Struthers to provide information regarding Hunterston B's plans for temporary or permanent asbestos storage on site at the next SSG. Joe Struthers reported that Hunterston B had compiled an asbestos register in 2014 that it regularly updated. Its approved asbestos coordinators were undertaking detailed surveys of the zones onsite, and this would be completed by the end of the year. The demolition fuel intrusive surveys had taken place for all buildings intended for demolition, and all had been clear from asbestos. Hunterston B utilised Altrad as its specialist asbestos contractor and Equans as its specialist waste contractor. Non-active asbestos had been disposed of via approved waste disposal routes. There were no plans to create asbestos storage on site.

David Wallace, Mark Blackley and Bill Hamilton to inform the NDA and NRS of the concerns highlighted by the SSG regarding the removal of the temporary cladding. It was confirmed that the action was closed. Mark Blackley explained that a sample of the weather barrier had been sent to a specialist paint contractor, who had tested various paint products on the weather barrier. The sample had been returned, and the site would assess whether it was viable to change the colour.

ACTION: Mark Blackley to provide an update on the weather barrier at the next SSG.

John Lamb proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by the Chair. The minutes of the meeting of 13 June 2024 were approved as a true and accurate representation of the meeting.

4. HUNTERSTON B SITE REPORTS

Hunterston B Site Report

Joe Struthers presented his report.

The final fuel route outage for reactor 4 had been completed. Defueling continued, and as of 5 September 61% of the second reactor had been defueled, while 188 of 308 channels had been defueled.

Enhancements had been implemented to assist the removal of tie bar end fittings, and no further issues had arisen. An NRS staff engagement session had taken place in June and had been well supported by NRS.

A local fire alarm had been initiated in the in the Hunterston B district survey laboratory. A site fire team had been deployed and had confirmed a smell of burning, with a small amount of smoke detected. It had been identified that a component on a computer uninterruptable power supply had been overheating, causing the fire alarm to initiate. There had been no flames.

A counter-terrorism emergency exercise demonstration had taken place with internal and external regulators. The exercise had been successful, which the ONR had deemed as an adequate demonstration of the site's arrangements.

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The management team had been restructured. Collective and individual consultation had concluded, and the site was aspiring to match the aspirations of individuals to roles and the new structure. The process was likely to conclude by yearend.

ONR Report

Steve Saunders presented his report.

The ONR continued to monitor the preparations for the transition and transfer, particularly the proposed changes to the organisational structure. Hunterston B had completed a phase 1 counter-terrorism emergency exercise, demonstrating adequate site arrangements.

SEPA Report

Keith Hammond presented his report.

SEPA staff had attended the start-up meeting for the Hunterston habits survey on 24 June. The survey was being conducted by the University of Sterling. SEPA continued to monitor the minor leak of non-radioactive biodegradable oil from an oil-filled cable.

Questions & Answers

The Chair requested that Hunterston A and B schedule a walkaround to view the external buildings. Joe Struthers acknowledged this request.

ACTION: Hunterston A and B to schedule a walkaround to view the external buildings.

The Chair asked what currently took place within the district survey laboratory. Joe Struthers explained that the district survey laboratory was used to test and analyse samples to ensure that the site did not impact the wider community. The Chair asked if more items were regionally tested. Joe Struthers responded that he believed that less items were tested on site but agreed to check this.

ACTION: Joe Struthers to ascertain if more samples were tested regionally or on site.

The Chair noted that a fire alarm had been initiated after a component on a computer uninterruptable power supply had overheated and asked if the site had power supplies that could not be interrupted. Joe Struthers responded that components would have the capability to changeover to an alternative supply or a battery back-up. The Chair asked if this approach was only adopted in power stations and industrial sites or because the site would be constantly monitoring components. Joe Struthers replied that he would need to check this. Hunterston B did not want to have an interrupted power supply as many of its facilities were designed to allow for emergency responses.

The Chair highlighted the minimum aqueous discharge flow rate. Keith Hammond explained that a first round of consultation had taken place with the ONR, Food Standards Scotland (FSS) and Scottish ministers, and SEPA awaited a response from FSS. It was anticipated that the application would be determined by 1 August 2026. The Chair queried the dose rate. Keith Hammond responded that it was approximately 200 microsieverts and was extremely conservative. The legal dose rate was 1,000 microsieverts.

The Chair asked if SEPA would review the different radionuclides in the water. Keith Hammond confirmed that it would.

The Chair noted that Hunterston B would amalgamate its control and transfer deconstruction departments. Joe Struthers stated that the proposed process aligned with the agreed way forward.

John Lamb asked if environmental health had been updated on Hunterston B's proposed approach to asbestos storage. He also noted that asbestos disposal required significant security. Joe Struthers stated that the site had safely managed asbestos for several years. It

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had approved asbestos contractors and waste coordinators, and it complied with the regulations. Steve Saunders stated that the ONR was responsible for regulating the control of asbestos on site, and the ONR had conducted an inspection within the last year. It was likely that it would conduct a further inspection during the decommissioning phase.

John Lamb stated that there would likely be a significant amount of material during the decommissioning phase. Joe Struthers stated that the ongoing surveys were due to be concluded by the end of the year and would help inform the site of its asbestos volumes. It currently had a register, which was maintained.

5. HUNTERSTON A SITE REPORTS

Hunterston A Site Report

Mark Blackley presented his report.

There had been one reportable injury, where a radiological monitor had bumped their head in C3 conditions and had sustained a minor cut. The monitor had not initially returned to work following the incident but had since resumed work and was fully fit.

During the planned calibration of the WILWREP manual stack train (MST), it had emerged that the calibration period had expired. The planned calibration had been successfully undertaken and had confirmed that the MST was operating as expected with no drift from the previous calibration.

The SAWBR team had been working to a 'back out plan' for the SAWB bunkers, with the aim of achieving post operational clean out status. Recovery of the fine dusts had been slower than anticipated, and Brokk 1 had experienced several unrelated faults. However, the repairs had been implemented, and the site would now recommence hoovering the fines.

WILWREP had been reconfigured to start retrieving and encapsulating acid. The site had entered the first stage of active commissioning, and it had filled the first drum. The drum was being monitored for gaseous discharge before it would be exported from the facility.

It was noted that it had been previously reported that Hunterston A would process ILW packages in SILWE manually without the KUKA robots. This package of work had recently passed design approval, with the focus now shifting towards the procurement, manufacturing and installation of the operator shielding platform.

The reactor 2 roof repairs were complete, and it was expected that minor work concerning reactor 1 would be concluded by the end of September. The project to determine the best practical means (BPM) for dealing with the bunker waste was progressing well. Phase 1 of the project was proceeding, and its output would be provided to SEPA and the ONR for comment once completed.

ONR Report

Peter Hughes was not present.

SEPA Report

Melanie Hayes presented her report.

SEPA had undertaken site inspections on 12 June and 13/14 August, and the site had demonstrated compliance with all the conditions that it had been assessed against.

Melanie Hayes had reviewed the additional information regarding the site ventilation system defects and had informed the site that it was now compliant with the standard conditions.

SEPA awaited information to close out the discharge returns notice. The outlined actions would be delivered during 2024 as per the dates provided by NRS.

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Melanie Hayes reported on the aqueous discharge variation application. Following the last meeting, FSS had requested that its review period be extended by two months. FSS had recently provided its response to state that it was content there would not be a significant change to the risks from consumption of food. The documentation for the public consultation had been completed and it was hoped that it would be published imminently. It was also anticipated that the consultation period would last between six and eight weeks.

SEPA had been notified of a loss of refrigerant gas at Hunterston A on 18 July and 25 July. The site was liaising with the SEPA's F gas specialist with regards to these losses.

Questions & Answers

John Lamb highlighted the additions made for the manual refilling of the bunker waste and asked if there was a timescale for commencing encapsulation of the boxes. Mark Blackley responded that this would likely occur by spring 2026 and added that it might align with the permit variation approval.

John Lamb said he assumed that there would be a characterisation of the store's content. Mark Blackley stated that the permit variation only pertained to bunker 1 waste. The 300 boxes in bunker 1 would first be encapsulated. The work to identify waste for bunkers 2 to 5 would require an amendment of variation to the BPM. The site was working through this project to demonstrate the BPM. It was likely that it would take another four years before the site would require a permit variation to encapsulate the waste from bunkers 2 to 5.

The Chair stated that she and Stuart McGhie were interested in the best practical means that would be selected for characterisation of the waste for the bunkers. It had taken 10 years to empty the bunkers, and it appeared that it would take another 10 years to encapsulate the boxes in the encapsulation plant. Mark Blackley said, subject to all permissions being in place, it would take two years to start work and six years to encapsulate all 1,200-plus boxes. Melanie Hayes said SEPA would need to consider whether to provide permission for bunkers 2 to 5 to be encapsulated.

The Chair noted that there had been an indication that all boxes would be encapsulated in concrete. Melanie Hayes said this remained a possibility. The Chair stated that she had assumed that the NDA had already determined that concreted stainless-steel boxes, with ILW, would be suitable for any geological disposal facility. Melanie Hayes explained that any facility would need to demonstrate a waste acceptance criteria regardless of it being a geological facility or near site, near surface. Steve Saunders added that the disposal facilities were based upon a certain format of waste. Melanie Hayes stated that it was extremely important that the bunker 1 waste was encapsulated. It was also hoped that a compromise would be identified for bunkers 2 to 5.

John Lamb asked how the weather barrier was progressing. Mark Blackley explained that the site had recently completed a demolition survey for the area immediately within the barrier. It did not intend to install metal cladding to replace the current weather barrier. However, it had acknowledged concerns raised and was reviewing alternative options. There was an intention to retain the weather barrier beyond its intended lifetime, and there would need to be some proactive maintenance.

The Chair asked if a decision had been made regarding parts of the fuel rod that remained in one of the vaults[?]. Melanie Hayes responded that NRS would need to decide if it would classify it as waste or fuel. Should it be classified as waste it would fall under the remit of SEPA. Mark Blackley stated that the site had completed an assessment and was reviewing the report. It had recognised that the fuel could not remain within the bunker. The current proposal encompassed storing the fuel in a 3 cubic-metre box and transferring it to a store, which would not foreclose any future options for the fuel.

Stuart McGhie asked if the fuel would be classified as waste if it had been stored within the reactor. Mark Blackley explained that Scotland's higher-activity radioactive waste policy stated

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that radiated fuel could not be classified as waste. The radiation levels were lower than some of the waste streams that had already been encapsulated.

Steve Saunders stated that, should it be classed as fuel, it would need to be monitored. Mark Blackley confirmed that Hunterston A monitored the fuel. Colin Hargreaves explained that NRS had undertaken an assessment on this, and the site's documentation process had been in place.

The Chair noted that Mark Blackley was attending his last SSG and commended his welcoming nature on site. John Lamb presented Mark Blackley with a medal, and the attendees afforded Mark Blackley a round of applause.

6. AYRSHIRE CIVIL CONTINGENCIES TEAM UPDATE

There was no update.

7. UPDATE FROM NDA

David Wallace presented his report.

Following the recent general election, Ed Miliband had been appointed as Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, while Lord Hunt Minister had been appointed as Minister of State at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Lord Hunt would attend the stakeholder summit in a virtual capacity, while local MPs had been invited onto site.

The second meeting of the Cross Party Group on Civil Nuclear Industry would take place on 11 September. The session would address skills and would also be attended by Ayrshire College and Dumfries & Galloway College. The third meeting on 17 December would cover the waste policy, and the agenda was being devised.

The SSG review was taking place, and the results would be announced at the stakeholder summit.

The NDA was in the process of recruiting for its third secondment into Scottish Government's radioactive waste substances team. The secondment would last 18 months.

The sustainability report had been circulated.

8. NRS CORPORATE UPDATE – INTRODUCTION TO THINKS INSIGHT

Bill Hamilton explained that NRS, with the support of the NDA, had moved away from a care and maintenance approach to site-specific decommissioning strategies. NRS would develop its conversations with the wider communities, and it had commissioned Thinks Insight to undertake a polling exercise.

A video was shown demonstrating Thinks Insight's engagement with local communities.

There would be a further programme of engagement over the next 12 months, including engagement with the Hunterston community. Bill Hamilton expressed hope that NRS would succeed in creating a stronger bond with local communities and include them within the discussion.

Questions & Answers

The Chair suggested that the public would highlight safety, security, jobs and the environment as areas of focus. Bill Hamilton stated that NRS would build upon this. The conversation would then need to progress to address potential proposals for Hunterston. The Chair stated that it would be beneficial for NRS to better inform the public to allow it to form its own opinions. She also added that nuclear technology did not appear to be covered in schools. Bill Hamilton said that NRS had a specialist team which engaged with schools and attempted to influence

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the curriculum. Engagement was also taking place with college students to encourage them to select STEM subjects.

Melanie Hayes requested access to the video. Claire Aitken confirmed that she would upload the video onto the SSG website.

The Chair noted that there would be a meeting of the NGO/NDA forum on 9 September. The NGOs were requesting money for citizens science projects, and she asked if NRS/NDA could link this to its programme to inform the community. Bill Hamilton responded that NRS's programmes of work were subject to a spending review. It aimed to next engage with Wylfa, Olbury and Chapelcross and implement mobile exhibitions. It also planned to hold a stakeholder day.

9. UPDATE FROM SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Diane Hamilton presented her report.

The Scottish site nuclear stakeholder group meeting had taken place virtually on 14 August. The Scottish Government was reviewing the higher activity waste policy and the implementation strategy. While consultation would take place in 2025, informed stakeholders were being invited to provide their views by 30 September and highlight aspects of the policy that required further clarity or development.

Questions & Answers

The Chair asked if the policy would include amendments to the requirements for near surface. Diane Hamilton responded that everything within the policy would be reviewed, including near site, near surface.

John Lamb asked if the current draft policy was available for review. Diane Hamilton replied that the policy and strategy was on the website. She agreed to circulate a link to John Lamb.

ACTION: Diane Hamilton to circulate a link to the draft higher activity waste policy to John Lamb.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting.

Next Meeting date: Thursday 5 December 2024.