



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT THE WATERSIDE HOTEL, ARDROSSAN ROAD, WEST KILBRIDE, KA23 9NG
THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025**

Attendance/Apologies list

Attendance

Ms Rita Holmes
Mr Stuart McGhie
Mr John Lamb
Mr Jamie Woodburn

Fairlie CC (Chair)
HNB Union Rep (Vice Chair)
West Kilbride CC
Largs CC

Operators and Officers

Ms Fiona McCall
Mr Andy Dalling
Mr Richard Gibson
Mr Keith Hammond
Ms Melanie Hayes
Mr Paul Dale
Mr Peter Hughes
Mr Bert Saunders
Ms Claire Aitken
Mr David Wallace
Ms Diane Hamilton

EDF
Site Director (Hunterston B)
Engineering Manager (Hunterston A)
SEPA (Site Inspector, Hunterston B)
SEPA (Site Inspector, Hunterston A)
SEPA
ONR (Site Inspector, Hunterston A)
ONR (Site Inspector, Hunterston B)
NRS
NDA (Stakeholder Lead Scotland)
Scottish Government

In Attendance

Mr Alan Holden
Cllr Ian Murdoch
Mr Angus Cochran Patrick
Mr Matthew Dent
Members of the public

Member of the Public
North Ayrshire Council
Hunterston Estate
Minute taker

Apologies

Mr Daniel Smith
Mr Bill Hamilton
Mr Willie Jack
Cllr Eleanor Collier
Colin Hargreaves

Site Director (Hunterston A)
External Affairs Director, NRS
NFU
North Coast and Cumbraes Council
Lead Site Inspector NRS

1. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair opened the meeting at 13.35. Apologies were noted from Bill Hamilton, Daniel Smith and Willie Jack.

The Chair noted that, at the previous meeting, there had been few community council attendees. There had not been an attendee from Cumbrae or Skelmorlie Community Councils in some time. Skelmorlie Community Council had a new chair and vice-chair, and an invitation had been extended.

No interests were declared.

2. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR UPDATES AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Chair presented her report.

The Chair had attended a strategy workshop on 15 January with the ONR and NGOs at which the ONR had shared a strategy document. On 21 January, the Chair had attended an online meeting with John McNamara, as they co-chaired the NDA/NGO forum. There had been an online meeting with chairs and vice chairs regarding emoluments. There had been an introduction to the new NRS sustainability strategy, as well as regular updates to the Chair and Vice Chair with the Hunterston A and Hunterston B site directors.

The next meeting of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Civil Nuclear Industry would be held at Annan Athletic Club on 24 March. Anyone who wanted to attend should contact David Wallace. The Teams invite would come out shortly.

A review had taken place of SSGs, and new guidelines would be coming out. The hope was that SSGs would reach a wider audience.

A consultation on aqueous discharge variations at Hunterston A and B was currently live on the SEPA website and would close on 22 April.

3. ACTIONS AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

John Lamb proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved. Jamie Woodburn seconded the motion. The minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2024 were approved as a true and accurate representation of the meeting.

4. HUNTERSTON B SITE REPORTS

Hunterston B Site Report

Andy Dalling presented his report.

Andy Dalling introduced himself as the new station director for Hunterston B, having started on 10 February. He had worked at Hunterston in various positions for 13 years.

Good progress was being made with defueling. Reactor 4 had been emptied in 14 months, which had been two months quicker than Reactor 3. Subsequently, work had been proceeding on emptying the pond, where flasking operations had come in. The final flask had been dispatched at the end of February. Verification checks were taking place ahead of external communications.

In terms of site transition, arrangements were being updated with a new safety case to be introduced. This would be formally submitted to the ONR for assessment with a view to implementation later in the year. Security plans were being adjusted, and once these had been approved by the ONR they would be shared. Emergency arrangements were also being worked through, ahead of formal submission. Small-scale deconstruction work was taking place, but this would ramp up as transition progressed.

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Safety performance continued to be good, reaching the end of 2024 with a zero Total Recordable Injury Rate (TRIR). There had been a significant safety campaign in January to avoid complacency.

A reorganisation exercise was taking place to move onto deconstruction. Once the site was fuel free sometime before June 2025, this would be enacted. The formal consultation and communication had taken place with staff. Recruitment for vacancies was underway, and the aim was no compulsory redundancies.

ONR Report

Bert Saunders presented his report.

The report covered the dates from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024, during which time the ONR had carried out a number of inspections covering emergency arrangements, management of change and decommissioning fire life safety. It had also provided consent for an environmental impact assessment for decommissioning regulations. Each of these inspections had found adequate arrangements implemented correctly. In terms of safety and security performance, the ONR was content for the period.

Since the report had been published, there had been one reportable injury, disease or dangerous occurrence. A member of CNC had twisted their knee descending stairs. This was regrettable, but not a significant incident.

The ONR was currently engaged with Hunterston B's proportional stepdown and emergency arrangements and management of change. With the site risk reducing, it was sensible to step down those arrangements, but suitable underpinning was required.

SEPA Report

Keith Hammond presented his report.

SEPA had been onsite in the previous week to update on the plans for the active effluent discharge line. No contraventions had been found.

There had been two separate applications. The application to vary the permit to change the aqueous discharge had gone out to consultation until 22 April. The transfer application to move the permit from EDF to NRS had been received and was being worked on. A provisional determination date of the end of January 2026 had been proposed. The expected transfer date was around 1 April 2026. There was no public consultation associated with this application.

There had been no environmental events within the period.

Consultations were being undertaken by SEPA on three documents. The first was the objectives and principles for regulation radioactive substances activities. The second was the environmental standards for inputs of radioactive substances to groundwater. The third was the near-surface disposal facilities on land for solid radioactive waste. These consultations run to 5 May 2025.

Questions & Answers

John Lamb noted there had been a report at a previous SSG meeting regarding the Civil Nuclear Police officers and asked which date that they would be present on the site until. Andy Dalling explained that the date the CNP was working to was August. John Lamb asked whether EDF would recruit its own security personnel. Andy Dalling explained that EDF would retain its own security, but these individuals would not be armed.

John Lamb queried how many staff were on site currently. Andy Dalling explained that there were around 380 staff onsite, and around 150 contractors. This would change in line with the

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organisational changes. The new number would be 246. John Lamb asked whether the contractors were for specific operations. Andy Dalling confirmed that they were.

Angus Cochran Patrick asked whether the EDF private security patrols would continue around the estate. Andy Dalling believed these would continue, but he would check and make sure.

ACTION: Andy Dalling to check whether private security patrols would continue on the estate.

Ian Murdoch asked what the next drop in staff numbers would be following the fall to 246. Andy Dalling said there were no further plans to reduce numbers. Stuart McGhie queried whether there was an opportunity to transfer staff for certain tasks across from B site to A Site. Andy Dalling said this was something NRS could potentially look at in the future, but the number of staff to support Hunterston B was set at 246.

The Chair queried whether the fish farm buildings had ever been included in the nuclear site. Andy Dalling confirmed they had not.

The Chair noted interest in the plans for the new active effluent treatment discharge line, as it would be a big difference with a dramatically reduced flow rate and moving away from the tidal windows. The Chair asked whether there were plans to extend the line into deeper water. Melanie Hayes explained that this was included in the consultation document. The pipe would not be lengthened.

The Chair noted the reference to a biodegradable leak and queried whether this was non-toxic. Keith Hammond explained it was largely non-toxic. One of the problems with detection was that it biodegraded before it could be found.

The Chair queried the meaning of CDM. Bert Saunders explained it referred to construction design and management regulations.

The Chair queried given the issues with laboratories whether there was a possibility of having one laboratory which could deal with all radioactive matters for the west coast. Keith Hammond agreed this would be a strategic ideal given the lack of capacity within the UK. In this case the laboratory was set up to service its own permit requirements. After transfer of Hunterston B there could be change.

5. HUNTERSTON A SITE REPORTS

Hunterston A Site Report

Richard Gibson presented his report.

Safety performance had been good, with no safety events above the minor categorisation. Storm Eowyn had caused some damage on site to the cladding. Personnel onsite had been minimised ahead of the storm and operations had been ceased, meaning that overall impact had been limited. There had been no risk to the public at the time, and repairs had now been completed allowing decommissioning work to recommence.

At the last SSG meeting, an update had been provided on the situation with the site laboratory. This was being managed through the event recovery process. Good progress was being made around plans for improvement to the physical laboratory structure, as well as revision of procedures and management. The laboratory was expected to be completed for reinspection by the summer.

Good progress had been made on the solid waste recovery plant. The team had prepared containers for the two partial fuel elements. These had been recovered and would be transported to the store sometime in March for interim storage.

NRS was undergoing a funding review alongside the rest of the NDA. This was expected to reflect a reduction in government funding for the next funding period. On some sites this may mean a pause or slowdown in operations. Due to the maturity of projects at Hunterston A, however, it was not anticipated that any key site activities would be significantly impacted as

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the Hunterston A principal waste processing facilities were built and either already in operation or at the end of commissioning and pausing operations would save very little money.

The NRS transition team had submitted applications to the ONR and to SEPA, which detailed how Hunterston B would safely join the NRS fleet.

ONR Report

Peter Hughes presented his report.

The report covered the period from 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024. During that time an inspection carried out had been green.

The ONR was continuing to support SEPA in regard to the laboratory incident and was aware of progress towards bringing the site back into compliance.

SEPA Report

Melanie Hayes presented her report.

In January, SEPA had attended the site to commence its investigation into the onsite laboratories. This would be ongoing over coming months. A lot of information had been requested. SEPA would be back onsite in two weeks' time to continue this. This matter had caused a delay to the monthly discharge returns, hence three-month rolling extensions had been granted and would continue until the laboratories returned to service.

Since the last SSG meeting, some of the actions from the information notice issued to NRS were still incomplete. SEPA expected to have all of the requested information by the end of June. NRS had been aware that an extension of this deadline would not be granted.

The consultation on the SILWE permit variation application had closed on 20 December with no representations made. A decision would be made in due course.

Questions & Answers

Jamie Woodburn noted that a press release had been issued by the ONR the previous day about an efficiency overhaul at decommissioning nuclear sites, which outlined that over 100 legacy regulatory requirements had been removed. Jamie Woodburn asked why he had found out about this through LinkedIn, and not at the SSG. Peter Hughes said the press release had been issued at the end of December. Jamie Woodburn emphasised that the SSG had not been made aware. Peter Hughes committed that it would be covered in his next report.

Jamie Woodburn asked whether there would be an event to mark the completion of defueling. Andy Dalling said plans were being worked through.

The Chair queried the purpose-built container for the fuel debris which had been isolated in one of the bunkers. Richard Gibson explained these were still in the bunker, but sometime in the month would be transported to the ILW store in the container. The Chair queried how the container was different. Richard Gibson explained it was a modified version of the usual container, to ensure there was adequate space around the fuel elements.

The Chair queried the definition of a category one responder. Richard Gibson explained it was the local community network to support in an emergency. In this instance it referred to Scottish Fire and Rescue, Scottish Ambulance and the police. The Chair suggested it would be useful to have an update from the civil contingency.

The Chair queried the meaning of 'orphan wastes'. Richard Gibson explained these were small amounts of debris which did not fit other definitions. Fine dusts were being dealt with via a vacuum system.

The Chair noted SEPA was having to wait a long time for a backlog of information and queried why. Richard Gibson explained this was partly due to lacking the personnel. The sites were keeping SEPA updated and ensuring there were adequate resources to meet current commitments.

The Chair queried the progress in deciding the characterisation of waste already in boxes. Melanie Hayes explained that this was with NRS. Richard Gibson would feedback on this to the next SSG.

John Lamb queried where the active fuel debris would be stored. Richard Gibson stated this would be in the ILW store. The safety case was still valid for this. The Chair queried the radius for the new emergency plan. Andy Dalling stated that this was being worked on currently.

6. UPDATE FROM NDA

David Wallace presented his report.

The Government had decided to move the plutonium stock to Sellafield, to a specially designed and built facility to be prepared for geological disposal. The Chair noted this decision had been a long time coming. David Wallace noted this would create a lot of jobs, including in design and construction, and operation once it was constructed. A £5 million grant had been announced for PhD student to look at how the material was treated in the centre.

The NDA business plan had been delayed and was due out for consultation on 10 March for a six-week consultation period.

The next meeting of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Civil Nuclear Industry would be on 24 March. The topic would be site end-states. A meeting had taken place on 17 December on waste policy. All minutes were available on the Scottish Parliament website.

7. NRS CORPORATE UPDATE

No update had been given,

Questions & Answers

The Chair queried how many MSPs attended the meetings of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Civil Nuclear Industry. David Wallace explained that all MSPs were invited. At the most recent meeting seven had attended.

Jamie Woodburn queried where the output of the independent review of SSGs could be viewed. David Wallace explained that the outcome had been released the previous day, with copies to the Chair and the Vice-Chair. The Chair noted that Claire Aitken would send it onto the rest of the SSG members. David Wallace added that the SSG chairs had until 28 March to feedback their views and that of their SSGs. It would then move to implementation.

ACTION: Claire Aitken to send the outcome of the independent review of SSGs to members of the SSG.

Jamie Woodburn queried how the Chapelcross masterplan had been created. David Wallace stated it had been out for around 12 to 13 years. There was a memorandum of understanding between Dumfries and Galloway Council, the regeneration agency SOSE, and the NDA/NRS. A project board had been formed, to realise the ambitions for the local community. It had been agreed to use the land as a Scottish Government hydrogen hub. A strategic partner was currently being sought with an announcement to be made on 12 March. Jamie Woodburn asked whether such an approach had been considered for Hunterston. David Wallace confirmed that talks had happened but had petered out. The Chair noted that Chapelcross had a large amount of land. Jamie Woodburn asked whether David Wallace could re-engage

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with North Ayrshire Council to ascertain its position. David Wallace agreed to speak to North Ayrshire Council again.

ACTION: David Wallace to speak to North Ayrshire Council regarding a potential cooperative approach to the future of the Hunterston site.

8. UPDATE FROM SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Diane Hamilton presented her report.

The Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 had been laid before Parliament on 27 February and would come into force on 1 June 2025. Diane Hamilton could send a link to the regulations to any interested members of the SSG.

Oliver Smith, who was a secondee from NRS, had returned to his role. The Scottish Government hoped to get another secondee going forward.

Jamie Woodburn noted that A strategy was required for the site, and NRS needed to produce options and work with the Scottish Government to see what was possible. The Scottish Government needed to play its part. Jamie Woodburn asked Diane Hamilton to feedback that this needed to start now, and the annual NDA meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy offered an opportunity in this regard. Diane Hamilton noted there was a regional development division which dealt with these things, but she would raise the matter.

The Chair noted the compiled views on the review of Scotland's Higher Activity Waste Policy. She queried when a draft policy would be seen. Diane Hamilton explained that the consultation would need to be concluded first.

A member of the public asked whether the regulations still required the appointment of a principal contractor. Bert Saunders confirmed that they did, which would be for NRS once the site moved over to them. Andy Dalling explained that it would be taken on a case-by-case basis for each project.

The Chair asked when the next site meeting would take place. Diane Hamilton said a date would be agreed for the summer.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair noted that there had been a suggestion to continue to have four meetings per year, but for one of these to be virtual. The Chair's initial reaction had been negative towards this, but she expected to be overruled on this. Angus Cochran Patrick suggested the March meeting might be easier to hold virtually. Jamie Woodburn suggested investigation of hybrid meetings. Ian Murdoch noted that hybrid meetings were difficult.

Stuart McGhie queried whether there was anything in the report of the SSG review which pertained the number of meetings per year. David Wallace stated that the report noted that one way to widen participation was through hybrid meetings. Claire Aitken suggested that she circulate the review report to SSG members, and this discussion could be concluded at the next SSG meeting.

The Chair thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 15.11

Next Meeting date: Thursday 12 June 2025.