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**NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY
RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling (WPDD)

Mandate of the WPDD Task Group on Nuclear Site Restoration (TGNSR)

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MANDATE OF THE WPDD TASK GROUP ON NUCLEAR SITE RESTORATION

Preamble

Around the world, nuclear sites are being restored for beneficial reuse. Restoration is normally considered the last step in a sequence of decommissioning steps but increasingly the value of long-term planning and parallel remediation is being recognised. It is essential that regulators know that liabilities are well understood and there is adequate financial provision. Recognising the potential issues with uncertainties in final site restoration costs is driving early site land and groundwater characterisation. Operators are also learning that early intervention to ensure prevention and minimisation of leaks of radioactivity and reducing groundwater plumes can reduce overall liabilities and ensure protection of the environment. Early intervention needs to be guided by good characterisation, reliable conceptual models and quantified goals. This understanding is also required to inform final site remediation where early intervention is not considered appropriate (or beneficial). For both early and final remediation it is important to have clarity and agreement on end uses and states for land and groundwater. Risk based end states have been developed in the US and more recently end states have been agreed with stakeholders in the UK (NDA sites). The US EPA has been instrumental in developing an integrated approach to remediation that allows local communities a role in site specific decision making. The French Atomic Energy Commission has also significant recent experience in site remediation.

Whilst the focus of site restoration is often about the suitable remediation of contaminated land and groundwater, the scope of this project is wider to encompass the aspects of land quality management that are appropriate even in the absence of any contamination. The aim of this is to help ensure that site operators are well positioned to respond promptly and effectively to any contamination event that may occur.

Currently most nuclear site restoration activity takes place at the legacy nuclear sites. This work has emphasised the need for better clarity in terms of the regulatory expectations for clean-up to facilitate delicensing and de-designation. At other nuclear sites the drivers are less evident and there is a risk that land quality issues are overlooked.

Description and membership

The Task Group on Nuclear Site Restoration will report to the Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling (WPDD). It will be discipline oriented, comprising experts in the field of nuclear site restoration, nominated by the member organizations of the WPDD. This representation will be wide-ranging, including policy makers, regulators, implementers and specialists. We will communicate with members of the Co-operative Programme on Decommissioning (CPD). We expect representation from the European Commission. Representatives of the IAEA are also invited to participate in the group.

The role of the Task Group on Nuclear Site Restoration is to provide the member countries with up-to-date information and to develop consensus regarding strategic aspects of site restoration at nuclear installations. To help achieve this it will keep under review relevant worldwide experience and will identify and examine pertinent issues that are of interest to its members, the WPDD and to the international community.

Remit

(1) To share strategic knowledge of international experiences, approaches, constraints on the restoration of nuclear sites, including all work associated with land quality management. The scope includes management of land and groundwater that is affected by radiological, chemical and/or hazardous materials contamination.

(2) To produce a report containing observations and recommendations to consider in the development of strategies and plans for site restoration at nuclear sites to support on-going and new projects at nuclear installations, to achieve value for money, safety of workers, protection of the environment and improvements in land quality management consistent with best practice and which enable the timely delivery of site interim and end-state targets.

Mode of operation

The mode of operation of the Task Group on Nuclear Site Restoration is based on working programme aiming to develop a status report.

A communication within the group takes place through technical meetings and teleconferences.

The work of the Task Group is complementary to that of the IAEA and the European Commission. It also seeks to ensure good coordination with the CPD programme, in particular in regard to technical aspects of the nuclear site restoration.

The Task Group will consider four strategic areas: national and site factors; prevention; harmonisation, environmental context and integration; and effective delivery.

The group will:

- Determine scope of strategic areas and exclusions
- Consider information sources, lessons to learn, best practice and findings from national level questionnaires
- Collate insights from the strategic areas and make observations of good practice and lessons to learn
- Provide expert opinion on their respective areas
- Identify areas for harmonisation in strategic approach
- Make recommendations on further work and/or research and development that will support site restoration

Duration of the mandate

The Task Group on Nuclear Site Restoration is set into force at the 14th meeting of the Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling (WPDD), held on 18-20 November 2013. The mandate expires on 31 December 2015. The mandate may be reviewed by the WPDD at its annual meeting in 2015.
