



Office of  
Environmental  
Management (EM)



Nuclear  
Decommissioning  
Authority

# Bilateral Agreements: Benefits, Opportunities and Challenges

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Waste Management 2011



# NDA Bilateral Agreements

- **With organisations in**
  - France; Germany; Japan; Switzerland; Belgium; Sweden, US
  - Due to be signed: Canada
  - Decommissioning, clean-up, waste management, geological disposal
  - Purpose: exchange info & “not reinvent the wheel”
    - Access to international good practice / lessons learned
    - Joint R&D
    - Benchmarking opportunities
    - Opportunities for technology transfer
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> party endorsement of what we do
    - Opportunities for developing the workforce through staff exchanges

# NDA-DOE Bilateral

- **DOE-NDA “Statement of Intent”**
  - signed March 2007 – 5 years, renew next year
  - Under auspices of higher level HMG-USG cooperation agreement
- **NDA-DOE agreement key for NDA**
  - NDA “model” based on (but different to) DOE
  - DOE similar technical & commercial / contractor challenges
  - Budgets not too dissimilar (exchange rate)
  - Scopes covers decommissioning, clean-up, radwaste management, (geological disposal)
- **Specific topics (YC covered)**
  - Monthly expert – expert calls
  - Expert site visits
  - 6 monthly high level review (UK-US alternate)
- **Future areas:**
  - Commercial / higher-level strategic / “big picture” interests
- **Challenges**
  - Cost – need to demonstrate vfm
  - Be seen as part of the day job

# Across the Pond

## Across The Pond

A Quarterly Update on Joint UK NDA/US DOE Activities and Initiatives

Issue **4** Summer **2010**

### 1 DOE-NDA discuss Spent Fuel Shipments

*Meeting with Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd. on Gap (non-US origin) Material Shipments*

Environmental Management (EM) supported a National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) led team on a visit to the Dounreay Site, near Thurso, Scotland on July 14-15, 2010.

The purpose of the visit was to meet with DSRL representatives on a potential Gap spent fuel (non U.S.-origin) shipment to the US at the Savannah River Site. The EM-HQ representatives included Yvette Collazo, Director for Technology Innovation and Development and Gary DeLeon, Director for Nuclear Materials Disposition.

Gary said "This visit gave me the opportunity to see first hand the complexities involved with planning and logistics for shipping spent fuel back to the US. I was impressed with the level of cooperation, integration, and teamwork between NNSA, EM, and the Savannah River Site to support this important initiative for the Administration."

The meeting with DSRL involved initial planning, logistics, schedules and contract requirements needed for the shipment to occur. The team also visited hot cell facilities where the spent fuel is currently being stored and performed visual inspections on some of the spent fuel to assess its integrity and condition. This potential shipment is part of the Administration's 4-year goal to accelerate nuclear material threat reductions efforts by the end of 2013 being managed by the NNSA Global



*Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd*

Threat Reduction Initiative Program. In support of this program, EM has responsibility for the receipt, storage, and eventual disposition of the spent fuel.

### 2 WIPP Program visit to NDA

On June 16th, Leif Erikson gave a presentation on the mission and vision of the US DOE to some 50 NDA staff involved in taking forward the UK's geological disposal programme. Leif is a consultant to Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and has more than ten years of active involvement in the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) repository in New Mexico, USA.

CBFO is responsible for the characterization, safe transportation and disposal of the US transuranic radioactive waste (TRUW), a waste category similar to the UK's long-lived intermediate level radioactive waste (ILRW). The NDA's Radioactive Waste Management Directorate, has utilized information from WIPP to develop its



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### Introduction

There is a growing appreciation that, with decreasing technology development budgets and increasing pressure on completing the cleanup mission as quickly and cost-effectively as possible, there is significant benefit to be gained from collaboration and joint Technology Development & Deployment, (TDD) efforts between organizations facing similar issues. With this in mind, the US Department of Energy (DOE) and the UK Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) in March 2007 in which both parties agreed to share information on lessons learned as well as collaborate on the development and application of new technologies and approaches to improve the safety, cost effectiveness and schedule of the cleanup legacy wastes. Since that time, a number of "Topic Area" discussions have been held, a number of collaborative technical programs started and significant information exchange activities have been completed.

The potential benefits of this relationship are significant, ranging from cost avoidance from identification of an approach to a problem that has been proven elsewhere through to cost sharing and joint development of a new technology to address a common problem. However, the success of the SOI is directly proportional to the level of effort that everyone invests and so we would encourage you to become proactive in making this

collaboration a success by reading this newsletter and making sure that your colleagues are aware of the contents and the SOI suggesting possible areas of collaboration and participating to the maximum level that your busy day-to-day activities allow. Thank you for your support.

#### John Mathieson

Head of International Relations (Nuclear Decommissioning Authority)



#### Ana Han

Lead Foreign Affairs Specialist, Office of Technology, Innovation and Development (DOE)



### 7th Standing Committee Meeting between USDOE - UKNDA held in Sellafield.

Members of USDOE and UKNDA met at Sellafield in October 2010 to review progress and identify further areas of collaboration under the Statement of Intent between the organizations. The US contingent was led by Yvette Collazo, Director of the Office of Technology Innovation

and Development along with Ana Han (Lead Foreign Affairs Specialist, Office of Technology, Innovation and Development (DOE)), Steve Schneider (Director, Office of Waste Processing) and Nancy Buschman (Office of Nuclear Materials Disposition). The group spent a day with Dr Adrian Smyer (NDA Director of Strategy), John Mathieson (Head of International Relations), Ron Gorham (Head of Supply Chain), Graham Jonsson (Head of Higher Active Wastes) and Melanie Brownridge (Head of R&D) discussing a wide variety of topics ranging from contractor incentivization to fuel drying and decommissioning technologies. Following these discussions the US group toured a number of facilities at Sellafield including B41, THORP, the vitrification plant and one of the current fuel ponds. Additional meetings were also held with members of the Executive Team of Sellafield Ltd and senior representatives of the UK National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL). Yvette Collazo said:

*"This has been an exceptionally useful visit to help me and my staff get a much better appreciation of the scale and complexity of some of the issues facing the UK NDA. There is no doubt that this has helped us to put our research and development activities into context and will help us to consider how better we can support collaborative efforts in the future".*

The 8th Standing Committee meeting is scheduled to take place during the Waste Management 2011 conference at Phoenix in March 2011.

