

WM2013 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 3: Canadian Perspective / Building Consensus with Potential Host Communities and the General Public

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Panelists:

1. **Heather Kleb**, *Acting President & CEO, Canadian Nuclear Association (Canada)*
2. **Jo-Ann Facella**, *Director of Social Research and Dialogue, Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) (Canada)*
3. **Linda Thompson**, *Mayor, Municipality of Port Hope (Canada)*
4. **Larry Kraemer**, *Mayor, Municipality of Kincardine (Canada)*

Approximately 70 people attended this session which opened with four panelists who shared their Canadian perspectives and discussed Canada’s challenges and successes in communication with the general public on matters dealing with radioactive waste removal and disposal. Mayor Linda Thompson shared her experience with the key factors to a successful public engagement. The presentations were followed by a question and answer period which included issues such as nuclear regulatory communication and the concept of host communities.

Summary of Presentations

Heather Kleb explained what Canada is like as a host community. She provided background on the Canadian Nuclear Association (CNA), a snapshot of radioactive waste management in Canada, challenges in public engagement, and opportunities for improved engagement. She also discussed message testing as a means to improve public engagement. Heather also provided information on Canada’s nuclear fuel cycle. She shared results of the Canadian nuclear attitude survey. She advised on radioactive waste message testing and discussed areas of concerns. CNA use of “Mental Modeling Technology” was discussed and several examples, with results, were also discussed. Heather concluded the presentation by pointing out that “people’s mental models – existing beliefs - must be considered to avoid escalating inappropriate concerns or raising new ones”.

Jo-Ann Facella discussed approaches to collaboration development and implementation of Adaptive Phased Management (APM). She advised on the need for consensus building, discussed Seaborn Panel, and commented on the necessity of broad public support to ensure the acceptability of a concept for managing nuclear fuel wastes. Jo-Ann also advised on how safety must be viewed from two complimentary perspectives: technical and social. She discussed how the dialogue process seeks direction from Canadian citizens for the development of the management plan and she advised that the preliminary assessment (2012) was an opportunity for both the community and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) to explore different questions. Jo-Ann discussed community well-being and NWMO’s commitment to implementing the project in a manner that contributes to the long-term well-being of the community and region. She advised that community well-being is defined as including five (5)

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assets: human, social, financial, physical, and natural. She discussed the importance of involving Aboriginal people and learning from their valuable knowledge. Jo-Ann also discussed how NWMO supports different communities in learning; for example, they provide visits to nuclear plants to see interim storage for used nuclear fuel. She concluded her talk with a discussion on the challenges in engaging the community to find a path forward.

Linda Thompson shared the Port Hope perspective on building and maintaining consensus with potential host communities. She introduced the Municipality of Port Hope, which is located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and has a population of 16,500. She advised that Port Hope is widely known for heritage conservation, with over 200 designated properties, 2 heritage districts, and Ontario's best preserved Main Street; however, what Port Hope is really known for is being home to one of the oldest nuclear sites and perhaps one of the oldest host communities. She provided a snapshot of the history of the waste that exists in Port Hope and commented on previous industry practices. She discussed the major clean up that took place in the late 1970's and early 1980's and the search for a long term solution by the community. She shared the Municipality's experience and the involvement with finding a community driven solution for Port Hope waste. She presented a project overview and shared the different challenges that face the Municipality with dealing with the long-term project such as: understanding the municipal legal authority, maintaining community engagement; how to define criteria for contaminants that needs clean-up, and how to deal with activist groups. She also discussed what she considers elements of success in Port Hope including: a willing and committed host community, a legal agreement, a municipal peer review team, ongoing dialogue and education, and coordinated communications with the community.

Larry Kraemer presented on the history of the nuclear industry in Kincardine including: Douglas Point and Bruce Nuclear Power development. He discussed the long term management of nuclear fuel Act (Bill C-27) and the creation of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO). He also advised on how Kincardine is leading by example, working with industry to develop solutions. He discussed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) in 2002. He advised on how traveling internationally to review technical infrastructure and communities has been very beneficial to understanding and learning from different community experiences. He concluded his presentation by sharing that nuclear power has strong support in Kincardine and that it has made a major contribution to the region's economy.

Questions and Answers

Subsequent to **Heather Kleb's** presentation, she was asked for her opinion on how to define a "host community" and how to get the public to think in terms of risk. She answered by stating that this did not come up and that the discussions were honest and focused on what was Low level versus High level.

Question to **Jo-Ann Facella** "you referred to a "dialogue" process- can you give us more specific information on how it was structured"? She replied by stating they sought direction from Canadians on indentifying questions to be asked and answered. The NWMO website was referenced as being home to a significant amount of literature and information; the audience was encouraged to visit to get more information.

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Linda Thompson was asked “given your experience, what do you think of the techniques that were used in your project? Would they work for other types of sites?” Mayor Thompson agreed that they would work in other communities, and shared that NWMO is included in the discussions and advised that she sits on a panel with NWMO to share experiences.

Larry Kraemer was asked about the Deep Geological Repository for LLRW – whether he found that this approach would imply that the material is more harmful than claimed. **Larry Kraemer** responded by saying that they looked at all options and wanted a very high level of safety before deciding on this approach.

Larry Kraemer was asked if decommissioning waste will also go to Deep Geological Repository. He replied that it is not part of the current license but it is anticipated in a future agreement.

Open session questions:

“In **Jo-Ann Facella’s** presentation you stated [that the] geology of the site must be ‘appropriate’ can you explain that key word?”

Jo-Ann Facella answered that it has different dimensions, technical and social. There are technical siting criteria and social siting criteria that must be satisfied. ”Appropriate” is how you make it a social decision.