

WM2013 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 81: UK/USA Partnering Across the Pond – Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

Co-Chairs: **John Mathieson**, *NDA (United Kingdom)*
Rosa Elmetti (Ramirez), *US DOE*

Panel Reporter: **Angie Jones**, *AMEC*

Panelists:

1. **John Mathieson**, *Head of International Relations, NDA (United Kingdom)*
2. **Laurie Judd**, *Vice President of Government Programs, NuVision Engineering, Inc.*
3. **Rosa Elmetti**, *Office of Environmental Management, International Programs, US DOE*
4. **Graham Jonsson**, *National Programme Delivery Manager, NDA (United Kingdom)*

This panel built upon the WM2011 panel that introduced the US DOE/UK NDA Statement of Intent (bilateral agreement). Representatives from US DOE and UK NDA discussed the overall accomplishments to date and the future direction. There was a presentation by Laurie Judd that included the successes to date as well as some of the lessons learned and areas for further development and improvement. The panel received input from the audience that will help to inform the content and focus of the agreement going forward.

Laurie Judd provided an overview of the bilateral agreement sharing lessons learned as the UK and US explored areas to collaborate in nuclear cleanup/D&D. Funding constraints have slowed progress. Highlights from the presentation are provided below:

- 70 areas of collaboration were identified but had to reduce this down to a manageable list with the following specialist areas explored deeper:
 - Spent fuel management
 - Plutonium management
 - D&D approaches and technical innovation
 - Waste management and stabilization
 - Others, including contracting/partnering and site security
- Developed Joint Task Force Plans to achieve tangible benefits
 - Joint R&D programs
 - R&D leveraging
- Observations from the program to date:
 - Time consuming, labor intensive to understand similarities, differences, and lowest level of need
 - Start very general and work way to the specifics
 - Needs a dedicated, driving force on either side of agreement to make progress; usually not part of the day job, but try and make it this
 - Commercial sensitivity and lack of funding can impede progress
- Next steps for the bilateral agreement
 - Continue development on top priorities leveraging expertise, experience, and funding

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- U.S.DOE Environmental Management values international programs and is committed to its continued engagement to leverage for success of both nations
- Looking at a Knowledge Management Portal to share information with IT systems; some challenges with DOE as host due to security requirements – that which FIU hosts and includes Sellafield input is however working.

The audience had the following input to offer the panelists:

- Participants requested more information on how staff from DOE can be placed within NDA to assist with shared learning and professional development.
 - The agreement encourages such placements
 - NDA has placed employees in the US, including graduate trainees,
 - URS has engaged both DOE and NDA in their work in the US and UK as part of M&O consortium; in addition they have developed links between academic communities in South Carolina and Cumbria; it was recognized this needs to be better communicated to the managers of the bilateral agreement
 - Security requirements for access and exchange of staff and contractors can be cumbersome which makes it difficult to promote short-term assignments
- Tangible benefits of bilateral agreement are hard to quantify in financial terms, but exchanges / benchmarking help develop regulatory confidence
- Participant suggested we publicize technology document recently compiled in the UK that is a technology database.

Also suggested that parties improve distribution of the “Across the Pond” publication promoting accomplishments of the bilateral.