

March 2006

CoRWM made the following statement on 16 December 2005

Short version:

"CoRWM has no position on the desirability or otherwise of nuclear new build. We believe that future decisions on new build should be subject to their own assessment process, including consideration of waste. As we have noted before, the prospect of a new nuclear programme might undermine support for CoRWM from some stakeholders and citizens."

Substantive version:

"CoRWM has no position on the desirability or otherwise of nuclear new build. Our primary task is to recommend the best option, or combination of options, for long-term management of wastes which now exist, or which will inevitably be created, for example as a result of decommissioning. As our terms of reference require us to, we have carried out work to establish the waste implications of new build decisions as part of a wide-ranging scenario exercise to establish whether or not our options could accommodate new build wastes. The results of this investigation published at para. 18 of our Phase 2 report (document 1210) are that solutions for existing and unavoidable future wastes would also be robust in the light of all reasonably foreseeable developments in nuclear energy and waste management practices.

"We believe that future Government decisions on new build should be subject to their own public assessment process, including consideration of waste, because such decisions raise different political and ethical issues when compared with the consideration of wastes which already exist. We have noted before that the prospect of a new nuclear programme might undermine support for CoRWM from some stakeholders and citizens and make it more difficult to achieve public confidence."

We stand by the above statement, but after stakeholder comment, add the following:

- We do not intend to give a positive or negative signal to new build in making our recommendations. New build wastes could in principle be accommodated within our options, but significant practical issues would arise, including the size, number and location of waste management facilities.
- The public assessment process that should apply to any future new build proposals should build on the CoRWM process, and will need to consider a range of issues including the social, political and ethical issues (for example the creation of further burdens on future generations) of a deliberate decision to create new nuclear wastes.