

CoRWM e-bulletin 42 May 2010

Welcome to this e-bulletin. We report on

- the 27-28 April CoRWM meeting, including discussion of
 - our draft Annual Report for 2009-10 which will go to Ministers at the end of June;
 - our first review of the Committee's effectiveness; and
- plans for our plenary meeting in London on 8-9 June.

Report of CoRWM meeting, Manchester, 27-28 April 2010

We met in private. We normally meet in public; but this meeting took place in the run-up to the General Election. There are established arrangements on how public bodies should behave during this period, and as a result we decided that we should meet in private.

We discussed an initial draft of our Annual Report for 2009-10 and arrangements for completing this by the end of June. We held the first in a series of reviews of the Committee's effectiveness. We discussed developments and progress in managing radioactive waste in the UK, including the recent recommendations of the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee. We also considered plans for the coming year including, in the near term, whether to respond to the Government consultations on funding decommissioning and waste management for new build stations.

Our draft Annual Report for 2009-10

The Annual Report will go to Ministers at the end of June and will be made available in the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies. The Committee has agreed with sponsors that this and future Annual Reports will include a summary of the Committee's work during the previous financial year and any statements that the Committee wishes to make on UK progress with managing higher activity radioactive waste, as well as the information on activities and expenditure.

We discussed an initial draft, proposed some changes, and agreed that factual comments should be sought from a number of organisations. This is now in progress. The initial draft is not public (as it had not been factually checked or discussed with the Committee) but the next version will be: we shall publish it by the end of May, for discussion at our 8-9 June plenary meeting.

Reviewing CoRWM's effectiveness

We agreed some months ago a set of criteria for measuring CoRWM's success (for example: is CoRWM seen as a trusted and authoritative source of advice?) and steps for gathering evidence to measure this, and agreed that we should periodically review our effectiveness and how we could improve it. In this, our first review meeting, we considered some available evidence and discussed what conclusions we could draw from it.

Our paper (document 2798) is on our website (<http://www.corwm.org.uk/Pages/Plenary%20Meetings/Forms/Meetings.aspx>) and our minutes (doc. 2820) will record the discussion in detail. We concluded that we had broadly delivered the advice that we agreed with sponsor Governments in our programme, but that we could do better, for example in terms of planning our work and allowing people more time for comment. On one criterion - whether we are having a demonstrable positive effect on the management of the UK's higher activity wastes - we discussed some apparently positive signs but mainly felt that it was too soon to tell. We plan to hold a further review every year.

We discussed the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee Report *Radioactive waste management: a further update* (2nd report of Session 2009-10, HL Paper 95). This made a number of recommendations, both in relation to managing the UK's radioactive waste, and to the work of the Committee. The Government will be responding. It is not appropriate for CoRWM to also respond but we agreed to prepare and publish our comments on the House of Lords' recommendations. There will be a draft of the comments for discussion at our June plenary.

Other developments

We heard a summary of developments in West Cumbria and elsewhere. We discussed whether to respond to the two DECC consultations on funding decommissioning and waste management for new build stations. There are issues on which we might wish to comment but we would need to discuss some of these with various organisations and DECC's June deadline means that there would not be enough time. After checking with DECC and determining that the deadline could not be extended, we decided that we would not respond to the two consultations.

Further details of the meeting

Papers for this and other plenary meetings can be found here:

<http://www.corwm.org.uk/Pages/Plenary%20Meetings/Forms/Meetings.aspx>

Draft minutes of the meeting (document 2820) will be published by the end of May 2010.

Our next plenary, London, 8-9 June 2010

Our next plenary meeting will be at MWB Business Exchange, 10 Greycoat Place, London SW1P 1SB, telephone 020 7960 6000, fax 020 7960 6100. Venue details can be found here: <http://meetingvenues.mwbex.com/meeting-room/Victoria.html>

Plenary discussion is expected to include:

- the draft Annual Report for 2009-10;
- the House of Lords' recommendations
- a geological disposal update including developments in West Cumbria and elsewhere;
- detailed work plans for 2010-11, including preparations for review of NDA's draft Strategy II.

A detailed agenda, including start and finish times, will be published around 25 May.

After June, our next plenary meeting will be in August 2010

We shall not be meeting in July. Our next plenary meeting will be on 24-25 August in York.

Further information about our work can be found at <http://www.corwm.org.uk> or from our secretariat at CoRWM, Area D, 3rd floor, 3 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW, telephone: 0300 068 6117, e-mail: corwm@decc.gsi.gov.uk. Our phone numbers are:

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