

Unite Response to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Draft Business Plan 2009/2012

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Unite welcome the opportunity to respond to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Draft Business Plan 2009/2012.
- 1.2 This submission represents the views of Unite the Union. Unite is the UK's largest Trade Union with 2 million members working in a raft of industrial sectors including energy, manufacturing, construction, engineering, transport, information technology, finance, local authorities and the National Health Service.
- 1.3 Unite represents thousands of members in the nuclear energy sector and the related supply chain. Furthermore Unite represents members across the whole of the energy production and distribution sector along with members in the engineering construction industry who both build, repair and maintain the UK's power generation infrastructure.

2. Commercial Value

- 2.1 Unite believe that the best way for the NDA to maximise commercial value from its existing assets and operations is to ensure that the Site Licence Companies (SLCs) reduce their overhead costs and increase productivity by developing the skills base of their employees, allowing them to take on additional responsibilities.

3. Performance

- 3.1 The NDA has to improve its own performance and must reduce its running costs by 10% per annum for the next 5 years to achieve a 50% reduction (in real terms) in running costs.
- 3.2 The resulting financial saving must be used to increase the decommissioning programme at all SLCs and to finance craft, technician and graduate training.

4. Hazard and Risk Reduction

- 4.1 Unite believe that industrial and radioactive safety is a top priority and there is an absolute need, through best practice, to improve the safety culture throughout all SLCs.
- 4.2 Unite would agree that a great deal has been done in this regard, however we need to keep the focus on this vitally important issue.

5. Socio-Economic Development

- 5.1 Unite believe that in the current economic climate the NDA should consider giving greater emphasis to its socio-economic objectives.
- 5.2 Unite would endorse a greater engagement with industry nationally and locally to ensure that the supply chain can give the maximum benefit to each of the areas within which NDA sites are located.
- 5.3 Unite would urge the NDA to engage the Engineering Employers Federation, the Energy Industries Council and perhaps the Confederation of British Industry, with a view of seeing what benefits could be highlighted in each area in terms of developing new businesses and new initiatives to create employment.

6. Sellafeld Limited

- 6.1 Unite believe that this SLC is massively over managed and there needs to be substantial reduction in management levels. This would free up finance in order to increase decommissioning, also to set aside finance that could be used to create an investment programme (together with private finance) to build a new Mox plant at the site.
- 6.2 There is no need for compulsory redundancies, there is a shortage of management and professional engineering skills in other areas within the nuclear industry, for example at the Nuclear Installation Inspectorate.

7. Magnox North and South

- 7.1 Magnox North and South should be managed as one entity and again the management levels should be substantially reduced. The employees that would be “freed up” should be directed to other areas in the nuclear industry where there are shortages.

8. Dounreay Site Restoration Limited

- 8.1 Unite are of the opinion that there needs to be a reduction in management levels at this site. New initiatives in the local area need to be implemented to re-deploy those employees who would be affected as a consequence of taking this course of action.
- 8.2 Unite welcomes the high hazard funding that has been allocated to the Dounreay site, however we have concerns that funding will be significantly reduced in the future.
- 8.3 Unite would also highlight the fact that the Dounreay site has continued to deliver the efficiencies required by the NDA and would suggest that this is taken into account in future funding decisions.

9. Research Sites Restoration Limited

- 9.1 In respect of Harwell and Winfrith, as these 2 locations were former parts of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) business and it is now proposed to put them into one SLC that will include Magnox North and South, Unite believe it is essential that the funding be substantially increased in order to achieve complete decommissioning within a decade.
- 9.2 These 2 locations need to be given priority in the new SLCs decommissioning programme.

10. Springfields Fuels Limited

- 10.1 Unite believe that once again management levels should be reduced and engineering skills re-directed at this site.
- 10.2 Unite would also suggest that this SLC is put on a long term lease in order to produce the nuclear fuel elements for the Westinghouse AP1000. This is not a question of entering into some futile competition, this is a question of meeting the national need and it is quite clear that Westinghouse is the only company that would be interested in developing the Springfields site.
- 10.3 Unite would urge the NDA to negotiate an appropriate agreement with Westinghouse.

11. New Nuclear Build

- 11.1 Unite believe that the NDA must put compulsory purchase orders on the land that has been bought by EDF at the Wylfa site in order that this land can be put on the market (together with the land that is owned by the NDA) for building new nuclear power stations.

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