A safer future by managing radioactive waste effectively, to protect people and the environment
Conditions of Publication

This report is made available under the Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM) Transparency Policy. In line with this policy, RWM is seeking to make information on its activities readily available, and to enable interested parties to have access to and influence on its future programmes. The report may be freely used for non-commercial purposes. RWM is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), accordingly all commercial uses, including copying and re-publication, require permission from the NDA. All copyright, database rights and other intellectual property rights reside with the NDA.

Applications for permission to use the report commercially should be made to the NDA Information Manager.

Although great care has been taken to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information contained in this publication, the NDA cannot assume any responsibility for consequences that may arise from its use by other parties.

© Nuclear Decommissioning Authority 2015. All rights reserved.

Other Publications

If you would like to see other reports available from RWM and the NDA, a complete listing can be viewed at our website www.nda.gov.uk, or please write to us at the address below.

Feedback

Readers are invited to provide feedback on this report and on the means of improving the range of reports published. Feedback should be addressed to:

RWM Feedback
Radioactive Waste Management Limited
Building 587
Curie Avenue
Harwell
OX11 0RH

email rwmfeedback@nda.gov.uk
The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is making good progress in dealing with the UK’s nuclear legacy and is bringing the very best skills and expertise from around the world to do this safely and in the most efficient and cost-effective way. A key part of dealing with this legacy is the management of higher activity radioactive waste\(^1\) and its eventual disposal. A Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) is a vital final piece in the decommissioning programme. In pursuit of that, NDA established Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM) as a wholly owned subsidiary on 1 April 2014 for the purpose of delivering a GDF and providing solutions for the management of higher activity radioactive waste.

Our vision in RWM is *A safer future by managing radioactive waste effectively, to protect people and the environment*. In order to achieve this, RWM will work with the producers of radioactive waste to provide packaging solutions that ensure that the waste can be stored, and eventually, disposed of, in a safe and cost effective way.

RWM has a key role as the NDA’s delivery body for developing a GDF. That role, and the process for siting a GDF, is set out in the White Paper Implementing Geological Disposal\(^2\). The process set out in the White Paper for finding and developing a site for a GDF is based on the principle of working with communities that are willing to participate in this process.

Establishing RWM as a wholly owned subsidiary of the NDA and publication of this corporate strategy are important steps towards achieving our vision.

---

Managing Director’s Introduction

As Managing Director of Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM), I am delighted to present our first corporate strategy document.

Our role is to provide solutions to support our parent organisation, the NDA, its site licence companies and waste producers in the management of radioactive waste. We aim to help them retrieve, condition and package wastes now in ways that make them suitable for disposal later. In parallel with this we are working to develop a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for the long-term management of the wastes with a view to eventual disposal in line with the UK Government’s 2014 White Paper Implementing Geological Disposal. The White Paper recognises that the management of radioactive waste is a devolved policy issue and it sets out the policy position for the UK, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland (see Annex A).

This document sets out our approach for achieving a safer future by managing radioactive waste effectively to protect people and the environment. First, it sets out the vision, mission and values we have established for RWM. It then goes on to describe the strategic drivers – external factors that influence what we need to do, and how we go about doing these things. From consideration of the strategic drivers, alongside the vision, mission and values, we develop our corporate strategy. Finally, we provide a description of our governance model setting out why we believe this is the right model to help deliver our commitments.

This is our first corporate strategy. By 2018, we plan to review the strategic drivers and identify if any changes to our corporate strategy are required. We also plan to refine the corporate strategy on the basis of feedback we receive and so we welcome your views or comments.

Bruce McKirdy
Managing Director
Our vision
A safer future by managing radioactive waste effectively, to protect people and the environment.

Our mission is to
Deliver a geological disposal facility and provide radioactive waste management solutions
Our Vision, Mission and Values

Following engagement with stakeholders, staff and our Board of Directors, we have established a vision for RWM.

Our vision is aspirational and challenging, supported by a mission statement which says what we will do in order to achieve that vision. The mission statement and a number of supporting objectives provide the basis for our Business Plan which describes our work programme on a rolling three year basis.

We have also, through a similar process of engagement, established a set of values which describe the kind of organisation we strive to be. We actively use these values in developing the organisation and our people, who are central to the strategy set out in this document. The values are factored into our assessment of how well we are performing as individuals and as an organisation.

Professional
We are experts in our field, acting with integrity and efficiency to deliver the best solutions.

Responsible
We are committed to achieving the highest standards of safety and environmental protection.

Accessible
We are open and communicate in a straight-forward way that enhances understanding and encourages engagement.

Learning
We continuously learn, share knowledge and build strong mutually beneficial relationships.
Radioactive Waste Management

Corporate Strategy 2015-2018

Strategic Drivers

To provide the context for our corporate strategy we must first consider the key strategic drivers. These are listed below as a series of factual statements followed by a brief description of the implications, or ‘drivers’ on our strategy:

- NDA is responsible under the Energy Act 2004 for the clean-up of the UK’s publicly-owned, civil nuclear legacy sites including management of radioactive waste. It is also responsible for implementing Government Policy on long-term management of radioactive waste, including that set out in the 2014 White Paper on geological disposal of higher activity radioactive waste.

  To support it in discharging these responsibilities the NDA has established RWM as a delivery body to work with the producers of radioactive waste to develop waste management solutions, and deliver geological disposal for higher activity wastes.

- The UK regulators have issued Joint Guidance\textsuperscript{3} that requires site operators to demonstrate that they have considered disposability in their plans for waste packaging.

  This requires RWM to have a process that enables us to assess disposability of packaging proposals and influence how wastes are being packaged.

- Sellafield represents the largest single hazard and cost element of the NDA’s clean-up programme.

  NDA has identified Sellafield as a key priority and RWM needs to reflect this in its work programme.

- Government Policy\textsuperscript{4} is that before consents for new nuclear power stations are granted, the Government will need to be satisfied that effective arrangements exist or will exist to manage and dispose of the waste they will produce.

  This means RWM needs to engage with organisations seeking approval for new nuclear build in the UK, to advise on the disposability of their higher activity wastes. RWM also needs to advise these organisations and Government on the estimated costs of disposal.

- NDA sets out the implementation strategy to support UK Government Policy and also that of the devolved administrations. Agreement has been reached with NDA and the RWM Board that RWM will support the NDA Strategy and the lifecycle approach to the management of higher activity radioactive waste.


To do this, RWM needs to work with NDA and waste producers to deliver a programme of work to support implementation of NDA’s strategy in line with UK Government and devolved administrations’ policies. This should include early engagement with waste producers to consider the whole lifecycle of the wastes from retrieval, treatment, packaging, storage and disposal to ensure cost effective solutions and value for money for the taxpayer.

The development, construction, operation and closure of a GDF will be regulated by the nuclear regulators and, among other requirements, the developer will need to obtain permits from the environmental regulator and a site licence from the Office for Nuclear Regulation to undertake these activities.

RWM will need to demonstrate to the regulators that it has the necessary capability, organisation, resources and arrangements to undertake these activities safely and securely. To do this, RWM will need to demonstrate that the GDF will protect people and the environment at the time of disposal and in the future, following closure.

Development of a GDF is a long term project with an overall duration in excess of 100 years.

This requires RWM to be an organisation that can adapt to the changing needs of the project through research, site-investigation, facility construction, operation and closure. It also requires secure governance and funding mechanisms to ensure the project can be appropriately resourced over these very long timescales.

Implementing geological disposal of radioactive waste is a challenging social and technical task.

Research tells us that, as the organisation taking on this challenge, we need to be recognised as trusted experts. We need to be aware how we are perceived and respond accordingly.

Geological disposal is being pursued internationally as the long-term solution for higher activity waste management. Some programmes such as those in Finland, France and Sweden are significantly more advanced than ours.

We need to learn from their knowledge, technology and experience, which can reduce project risks and avoid unnecessary cost.
Our Strategy

In order to achieve our vision within the context set by the strategic drivers and in a manner consistent with our values, we have adopted the following corporate strategy:

- Work with the NDA to deliver an optimised programme for the management of higher activity radioactive waste.
  
  We will use our expertise to share knowledge and promote good practice and innovation in retrieving, treating and storing wastes prior to disposal.

- Engage proactively at an early stage with waste producers to develop and deliver prioritised programmes of disposability assessments.
  
  Historically our programme of disposability assessments reflected requests from waste producers on a first come first served basis. Now we are developing programmes to reflect NDA priorities such as hazard reduction on the Sellafield site.

- Deliver a programme for implementation of geological disposal in the UK in line with the 2014 White Paper and Government Policy.
  
  We will establish and deliver a comprehensive programme covering all stages of GDF implementation. Based on that programme, we will advise on waste management costs and timescales.

- Continue to engage with the regulators to ensure we have the necessary capability, organisation, resources and arrangements in place to apply for and hold environmental permits and a site licence, ahead of the time we need to apply for them.
  
  We currently have arrangements in place for regulatory scrutiny which enable the regulators to provide advice on our organisational development, as well as on our current activities such as the provision of advice on the disposability of proposed waste packages.

- Develop and maintain RWM as a capable and competent organisation with the skills and expertise to deliver our programme.
  
  The nature of our programme of work is such that the specific resources required at different stages of the programme will change. To accommodate these changes we make extensive use of the supply chain. To do this effectively we will ensure we have core knowledge within the organisation covering the nature and quantity of the waste, design concepts, safety and environmental assessments and underpinning research.

- Engage with appropriate stakeholders to help create the conditions which could lead to identification of a community, or communities, willing to participate in the process for siting a GDF set out in the 2014 White Paper.
We will develop and implement a comprehensive engagement programme to raise awareness and provide information nationally about geological disposal. Building on that, we will engage in more detail at the local level with stakeholders and communities potentially interested in hosting a geological disposal facility.

- Develop and maintain our geological disposal concepts to underpin waste packaging advice and provide a basis for the siting and development of a GDF.

We will undertake scientific and engineering work to support development of geological disposal concepts. This needs to reflect changes to the radioactive waste inventory and the understanding gained through our research programme.

- Benefit from the exchange of knowledge and expertise through cooperation with overseas waste management agencies.

We will establish long term relationships with our overseas counterparts through both formal and informal mechanisms. We will aim to transfer technology and knowledge from more advanced programmes to help reduce project risk and avoid unnecessary costs.
Governance

RWM was established in 2014 as a wholly owned subsidiary of NDA. The majority of RWM's activities directly support NDAs strategy and, as such, the two organisations have common objectives. Structuring RWM as a wholly owned subsidiary of NDA provides for appropriate governance to reflect this alignment of objectives. It also provides a delivery organisation which can apply for and hold regulatory permissions and licences as a legal entity in its own right as required by regulators. Other benefits of this arrangement include:

- It provides the ability, through NDA as the strategic authority, to influence waste producers to package wastes in a way that is suitable for disposal.
- It enables RWM to take a holistic view of higher activity radioactive waste management and prioritise our programmes accordingly.
- It establishes a separate legal entity with the minimum amount of bureaucracy and unnecessary expense.

Governance of RWM is through its Board of Directors which sets the strategic framework and direction within which RWM operates. It is responsible for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times. In particular, it is responsible for agreeing the plans against which overall performance and delivery is monitored and measured. It also ensures the maintenance of an appropriate control framework through which it obtains assurance that risk is properly assessed and managed.

RWM, as a wholly owned subsidiary of the NDA, operates in accordance with the provisions of the Energy Act 2004, under which the NDA was established, and Cabinet Office guidelines for non-departmental public bodies. RWM, like its parent NDA, seeks to apply as appropriate, best practice in corporate governance as represented by the UK Corporate Governance Code.

NDA sets out its requirements of RWM in a client specification. RWM incorporates these requirements in its Business Plan that sets out the forward programme and associated funding needs (Fig 1).
Fig 1: Strategy and Planning Documents

RWM’s clear accountability for delivery is to NDA through the RWM Board. Arrangements are in place through the Geological Disposal Programme Board for NDA and RWM to be held to account by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and the devolved administrations, for delivering commitments from the 2014 White Paper on geological disposal of higher activity wastes.
Annex A
Policy Positions for the Management of Higher Activity Radioactive Waste

UK Government
The UK Government remains committed to the policy of geological disposal, for the reasons set out in the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management original 2006 report and subsequent UK Government policy documents on radioactive waste management. The European Directive establishing a framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste recognises that deep geological disposal represents the safest and most sustainable option as the end point for the management of high level waste and spent fuel. The UK Government continues to favour an approach to siting a GDF that is based on the willingness of local communities to participate in the siting process.

The management of radioactive waste is a devolved policy issue. Therefore, the Welsh Government, Northern Ireland Executive and Scottish Government each have responsibility for this issue in respect of their areas.

Welsh Government
The Welsh Government has participated in the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) programme since its inception in 2001. The Welsh Government is committed to securing the long-term safety of radioactive wastes and to the implementation of a disposal framework appropriate to the needs of Wales and will continue to play an active part in the MRWS programme to promote the interests of the people of Wales.

At the time of publication of this document, the Welsh Government was reviewing its policy on higher activity waste management.

Northern Ireland Executive
The Northern Ireland Executive has responsibility for ensuring that any proposed GDF will not have an adverse impact upon the environment, health or safety of Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland continues to support the implementation of geological disposal for the UK’s higher activity radioactive waste, recognising that it is in the best interests of Northern Ireland that these wastes are managed in the safest and most secure manner.

Scottish Government
The Scottish Government is not a sponsor of the programme for implementing geological disposal, but does remain committed to dealing responsibly with radioactive waste arising in Scotland. On 20 January 2011, the Scottish Government published Scotland’s Higher Activity Waste Policy. Scottish Government policy is that the long-term management of higher activity radioactive waste should be in near-surface facilities. Facilities should be located as near to the site where the waste is produced as possible.