

Public and Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

Statement of Principles

August 2010



Critical Enablers



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1 Introduction

It is important that NDA decision-making is informed by a diverse range of views and that the rationale for major decisions and the processes by which they are reached is clear. We therefore regard openness, transparency and effective public and stakeholder engagement and communications as key to building the support, confidence and trust necessary for the NDA to deliver its mission. This individual strategy is one of the NDA's Strategy Management System's "critical enablers", which have been identified as key to the successful delivery of all the other individual strategies.

The principles listed below set out the NDA's approach to public and stakeholder engagement and communications and replace the NDA's Stakeholder Charter which we published in 2005. This document reflects the NDA's experience of engaging with stakeholders over the last five years, including through discussions at our National and Site Stakeholder Groups and a series of formal written consultations.

2 Objective

We have four objectives for public and stakeholder engagement and communications:

- To provide opportunities for the public and stakeholders to better understand, comment on and influence NDA planning and decision-making;
- To provide opportunities for the NDA to draw on the knowledge and experience of stakeholders to improve its planning and decision-making;
- To build relationships with the public and stakeholders that lead to mutual support and confidence;
- To enable the NDA to meet its legal and regulatory responsibilities to consult

These feed into one over-arching topic objective:

- To build and maintain the support, confidence and trust of the public and stakeholders.

3 Definitions

The NDA uses the following definitions:

Stakeholder – a generic way of referring to anyone who has an interest or "stake" in the subject or the engagement process under discussion – from interested agencies and organisations, to local communities and individuals. It is often used to distinguish interested parties from the (general) public.

Public – used to describe those people and communities who are not (or not yet) directly interested or impacted by the issues being discussed, nor are they satisfactorily represented by any existing stakeholders.

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4 Principles

In order to support the delivery of our Mission, the NDA's Public and Stakeholder Engagement and Communications processes will:

Be planned to enable influence. In practice this means:

- Engaging early, and before relevant decisions are taken
- Providing necessary contextual information as appropriate, including being clear about how and when any input can be made
- Clarifying what policies and decisions can or cannot be changed by the NDA as a result of any input

Be clear and transparent. In practice this means:

- Clearly communicating the aim, and scope of the specific process
- Ensuring relevant information is easily accessible and referenced
- Clarifying the linkages to associated NDA work and decisions

Be accessible. In practice this means:

- Publicising engagement opportunities as clearly, widely and early as possible in decision-making processes
- Considering the use of more than one method to engage the right people at the right times (including open access methods e.g. websites)
- Understanding who the NDA's stakeholders are, and being mindful that some stakeholders may need support and encouragement to participate effectively

Respect and value the public and stakeholders. In practice this means:

- Listening to and demonstrating how any input has been taken account of in decision-making
- Giving priority to public and stakeholder discussions and views during engagement
- Paying out-of-pocket expenses for participants

Give feedback. In practice this means:

- Publishing promptly a summary of any input received
- Demonstrating clearly how any input has affected the outcome
- Communicating progress made throughout the process, and any final decision, promptly

Build the competence of staff in delivering public and stakeholder engagement and communications. In practice this means:

- Building the skills and confidence of NDA staff delivering any engagement and communications via the Communications Team
- Providing high level organisational support and coordination for any engagement activities and learning
- Sharing and responding to findings and lessons from evaluation research through the Communications Team

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Be evaluated. In practice this means:

- Ensuring overall objectives and those for specific activities are measurable from the start
- Evaluating against agreed targets, objectives and these commitments
- The Communications Team taking a lead in evaluation for audit and learning purposes

Be proportionate. In practice this means:

- Designing activities for a specific purpose and set of circumstances
- Ensuring unrealistic demands are not placed on the public or stakeholders
- Being cost-effective, whilst using necessary resources to make a real difference

Comply with legal duties and appropriate codes or Guidance. In practice this means:

- Meeting requirements of the Energy Act to consult
- Meeting requirements of the SEA Directive to consult
- Operating within appropriate codes and guidance (such as the Better Regulation Executive Code of Practice on Consultation, 2008)

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Appendix 1 – Extract from the Energy Act 2004 regarding consultation

SCHEDULE 2 Section 11 – NDA **Strategy**, includes:

- 4 (1) Before—
- (a) preparing a strategy,
 - (b) revising a strategy in a manner requiring approval, or
 - (c) submitting a strategy to have the approval of the strategy renewed, the NDA must consult the persons listed in sub-paragraph (2).
- (2) Those persons are—
- (a) the Health and Safety Executive;
 - (b) the Environment Agency;
 - (c) the Scottish Environment Protection Agency;
 - (d) such persons with responsibilities in relation to nuclear security as have been nominated for the purposes of this sub-paragraph by the Secretary of State;
 - (e) every local authority whose area includes a designated installation, designated site or designated facility or a locality affected by activities at such an installation, site or facility;
 - (f) every person with control of such an installation, site or facility;
 - (g) the employees of every such person and the persons appearing to the NDA to represent them; and
 - (h) every body established— (i) by the NDA, or (ii) by a person with control of a designated installation, designated site or designated facility, for the purpose of consulting persons about activities carried on at, or in connection with, such an installation, site or facility.
- (3) In preparing, reviewing or revising its strategy the NDA must have regard to—
- (a) every representation made to it by or on behalf of a person mentioned in sub-paragraph (2); and
 - (b) the representations made to it by members of the public.

SCHEDULE 3 Section 13 – NDA **Annual Plans**, includes:

- 2 (1) Before preparing or revising a plan the NDA must consult—
- (a) the Health and Safety Executive;
 - (b) the Environment Agency;
 - (c) the Scottish Environment Protection Agency;
 - (d) such persons with responsibilities in relation to nuclear security as have been nominated for the purposes of this sub-paragraph by the Secretary of State;
 - (e) every local authority whose area includes a designated installation, designated site or designated facility or a locality affected by activities at such an installation, site or facility;

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- (f) every person with control of such an installation, site or facility;
- (g) the employees of every such person and the persons appearing to the NDA to represent them; and
- (h) every body established— (i) by the NDA, or (ii) by a person with control of a designated installation, designated site or designated facility, for the purpose of consulting persons about activities carried on at, or in connection with, such an installation, site or facility.

(2) In the case of a revision of a plan, the Secretary of State may allow the NDA to proceed without consulting one or more of the persons mentioned in subparagraph (1).

- (3) In preparing or revising a plan the NDA must have regard to—
- (a) every representation made to it by or on behalf of a person mentioned in sub-paragraph (1); and
 - (b) the representations made to it by members of the public.

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Appendix 2 – Site Stakeholder Groups

The NDA supports Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs) around the UK. The primary objectives of each SSG are:

- To provide an opportunity for questioning the operators, NDA and regulators on behalf of the community;
- To receive and comment on progress reports and forward plans for the sites;
- To represent the views of the local community through the provision of timely advice to NDA, operators and regulators.

To find out information on your local SSG, or to view the NDA Guidance for SSGs, please visit www.sitestakeholdergroups.org.uk