

Advisory Council to the
Nuclear Waste Management Organization

Record of Discussion: December 8, 2020 Meeting

Record of discussion of the meeting of the Advisory Council to the
Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) /
Société de gestion des déchets nucléaires (sgdn)

Convened via Videoconference,
commencing at 8:30 a.m. EST on December 8, 2020

Advisory Council Members Present:

David Cameron, Council Chair
Donald Obonsawin, Vice Chair
Monica Gattinger
Sue Hartwig
Derek Lister
Dougal McCreath
Linda Thompson
Diane Kelly
Joseph Cavalancia
Dean Jacobs
Stella Swanson

NWMO Staff Present:

Laurie Swami	President and CEO (items 1-21)
Mahrez Ben Belfadhel	VP Site Selection (items 1-21)
Jo-Ann Facella	Strategic Advisor, Community Engagement & Well-Being (items 1-20)
Lisa Frizzell	VP Stakeholder Relations (items 1-21)
Joe Gaboury	Director, Indigenous Engagement (items 1-20)
Paul Gierszewski	Director, Safety & Technical Research (item 13)
Sarah Hirschorn	Director, Geoscience (items 1-20)
Georgina Kossivas	Chief Financial & Risk Officer (item 9)
Monica Kumar Dhoat	Assistant Board Secretary (1-21)
Gillian Morris	Board Secretary (items 1-21)
Doug Taylor	VP & General Counsel (items 1-21)
Christina Vechler	Director, Partnership & Senior Counsel (items 1-20)
Bob Watts	VP, Indigenous Relations (items 1-21)
Allan Webster	Director, Regulatory Affairs & Environmental Assessment (items 1-20)
Derek Wilson	Chief Engineer & VP, Contract Management (items 1-21)

Guest:

Celia Milne Writer (items 1-22)

1. Constitution of Meeting / Approval of Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

The agenda was agreed upon as written. The Chair provided an Indigenous territory acknowledgement. Dr. Cameron welcomed Celia Milne to the meeting.

2. Safety Moment

Christina Vechsler presented a safety moment on the current top ten safety trends including personal protective equipment.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting / Action Items

The draft minutes and *in camera* minutes from the September 21, 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved by Council members with a minor change (*). The actions list was also provided.

4. President's Report

The President provided an update which summarized NWMO's 2020 achievements and progress made towards site selection as well as the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on NWMO's work. Ms. Swami highlighted the significance of the direction received from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) for NWMO to develop an Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste (ISRW). Ms. Swami also recognized the recent meeting of the Canada-United Kingdom Colloquium which was chaired by Dr. David Cameron.

The Council asked about how NWMO's siting communities were reacting to the direction NWMO had been given on the ISRW. Management relayed that NWMO had been preparing communities for this possibility and that all communities felt it was a positive step, understood it would not impact the work on APM and that no new waste streams would be imposed on communities. Council discussed the role it might have in this work. Ms. Swami indicated that the Council would be kept informed on progress and NWMO would find it valuable to have Council's advice even though the role is not formally specified in the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*. The Council also had questions about the impact of the ISRW on existing intermediate level waste projects and were advised that projects underway would continue to proceed. Council also discussed the timeframes for NWMO's work on development of the ISRW strategy and how it would relate to NRCan's policy development.

Items 5 & 6 were held In Camera

7. Update on APM Site Selection (*In Camera*)

The Council was provided with a progress update on engagement activities in the siting areas. The Council's discussion was held in camera.

Item 8 was held In Camera

9. Business Planning Overview (In Camera)

Council was presented with a summary of the NWMO business plan and budget forecast for the next five fiscal years. The Council's discussion was held in camera.

10. Traditional Knowledge Utilization Report

The Council was updated on the implementation of the Indigenous Knowledge Policy and how Indigenous knowledge is being utilized to improve NWMO processes. This month, the NWMO will be hosting their third annual Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science workshop. Mr. Watts reported that the objective of the workshop is to explore new opportunities for Indigenous Knowledge holders and western scientists to work together and inform research about the long-term performance of the multibarrier system in a deep geological repository. Focus will be on best practices of interweaving knowledge systems and will draw on experience from subject matter experts ranging from academia, community process leaders, consultants and industry.

With respect to the new Impact Assessment process and given the commitments to integration/interweaving of Traditional Knowledge, a Council member asked about NWMO's process of documenting its work. Mr. Watts reported that NWMO is still examining what this will look like in the IA process and is working with Indigenous organizations and NWMO's Council of Elders. A Council member stated his interest in receiving, if available, a copy of the report from the workshop (*).

Some Council members continue to express their dislike for the term "Western" Science.

11. Reconciliation Policy Implementation Update

Management provided an update to the Council regarding the implementation of the Reconciliation Policy and the progress related to Reconciliation. It was reported that NWMO is: developing the next phase in the Reconciliation training program; continuing the application of the Reconciliation assessment tool to NWMO's policies and procedures and; working on the Reconciliation baseline assessment.

12. Update on Draft Transportation Planning Framework

The Council was updated on the engagement completed on the draft Transportation Planning Framework and the next steps for the social transportation program.

A Council member asked if there were any surprises in the feedback received from the public. Mr. Watts reported that there was feedback received about the desirability for more Canadian specific transportation testing, more road testing and interest in the engineering aspects of transportation.

13. Safety – Year-end report

The Council was provided with an overview of NWMO's work in 2020 to engage the public and communities in discussions about safety to build confidence in safety and ensure that concerns are addressed, safety assessment scenarios considered are inclusive, and that technical and social safety are clearly linked.

Council members were supportive of the NWMO's approach on safety. Questions were asked about NWMO's work related to participation in virtual engagement events and differences in thoughts on safety in Indigenous versus non-Indigenous populations. A Council member suggested that NWMO reflect on forming a collaborative definition of the concept of "safety" to demonstrate a common ground with communities.

14. Visibility Update & Update on Work with Federal Government

Ms. Frizzell updated the Council on the implementation of NWMO's visibility strategy emphasizing NWMO's continued expansion of public awareness through traditional and social media, building advocacy and addressing misinformation about APM.

A Council member was interested in NWMO's assessment of the sentiments in the communities and heard how NWMO is working to understand what engagement methods resonate with different groups. A Council member also asked about NWMO's engagement with US officials.

15. Standing reports

Updates were provided to Council members related to: external landscape, Council of Elders & Youth and youth engagement.

A Council member was pleased to hear that NWMO is tracking the public's overall attitudes toward nuclear.

16. Report on Municipal Forum / Council of Elders

Council member Dean Jacobs, reported on his attendance at the recent meeting of the NWMO Council of Elders and Youth. Linda Thompson noted that the NWMO Municipal Forum had not met since her last report but are scheduled to meet in January.

17. APM Technical Overview

The Council was provided with highlights of technical activities over the reporting period of September through November which included updates of site assessment, engineering and technical transportation, and regulatory approvals activities.

A Council member noted an increase of technical questions in news reporting and requested information on the responses NWMO was providing to some of these questions (*). A Council member also requested to hear about site characterization requirements on key issues related to surface water, ground water and noise at a future meeting (*).

18. Preparing for Meeting with Board of Directors

Council prepared for its annual meeting with the Board of Directors.

19. Next Meetings of the Advisory Council

The Council was presented with the 2021 meeting schedule.

20. Update on the Tracking Matrices – Annual & Triennial

The Council was provided with the annual tracking matrix for 2020 which includes advice from the September 2020 meeting and the updated Triennial Report Tracking Matrix.

A Council member asked about the status of the reports on borehole drilling. Mr. Wilson noted the reports were in the process of being finalized.

Items 21-23 were held In Camera.

The Chair declared the meeting terminated at 2:00 pm.

(*) indicates action items.

Dated the 2nd day of March, 2021

David Cameron
Advisory Council Chair