

Advisory Council to the
Nuclear Waste Management Organization

Record of Discussion: March 21, 2022 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 9:00 a.m. EDT on March 21, 2022

Advisory Council Members Present:

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

NWMO Staff Present:

Laurie Swami	President and CEO (items 1-16)
Tareq Al-Zabet	Site Director, South Bruce (item 5)
Chris Boyle	VP & Chief Engineer (items 1-16)
Caitlin Burley	Manager, Transportation Engagement (item 9)
Lisa Frizzell	VP Communications (items 1-16)
Joe Gaboury	Director, Indigenous Engagement-Southern Ontario (item 5)
Bill Gascon	Site Director, Ignace (item 5)
Karine Glenn	Strategic Project Director (item 13)
Joe Heil	Director, Indigenous Engagement-Northern Ontario (item 5)
Sarah Hirschorn	Director, Geoscience (item 12)
Monica Kumar Dhoat	Assistant Board Secretary (items 1-16)
Jamie Matear	Director, Siting Coordination (item 5)
Melissa Mayhew	Senior Environmental Scientist (items 1-16)
Gillian Morris	Board Secretary (items 1-16, and 18)
Lise Morton	VP Site Selection (items 1-16)
Doug Taylor	VP & General Counsel (items 1-16)
Bob Watts	VP, Indigenous Relations & Strategic Programs (items 1-16, and 18)
Derek Wilson	Chief Operating Officer (items 1-16)

Guests:

Pat Beauchamp	Hill & Knowlton (item 7)
Celia Milne	Triennial Report Writer (items 15-17)

1. Constitution of Meeting / Approval of Agenda / Land Acknowledgement

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. EDT. The agenda was agreed upon as written. The Chair provided an Indigenous territory acknowledgement.

2. Safety Moment

Lisa Frizzell provided the safety moment related to travel safety.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting / Action Items

The draft minutes and *in camera* minutes from the December 7, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved by Council members. The actions list from the previous meeting and the Advisory Council workplan was also provided. Lisa Frizzell noted one amendment to the actions list.

4. President's Report

The President provided an update on recent developments which included updates on NWMO's work, the nuclear industry, government and international developments

The Council's discussion centered around recent activities related to Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and types of fuel that might emerge from that technology. Council members talked about potential reprocessing of fuel from SMRs and how clear communications around flexibility and retrievability will be increasingly important with the public. Management committed to bringing back to Council its thoughts around milestones for the public communication plan on SMRs and reprocessing (*). Council emphasized the importance of communicating that a DGR will still be necessary regardless of whether or not reprocessing comes to fruition.

A Council member suggested it will be extremely important to understand the Federal government's position on nuclear energy and also where nuclear fits into its NetZero strategy. Council also talked about messaging around transportation which may need to expand to other provinces should SMRs become operational. A Council member suggested that management think about how you would provide examples of experiments that would be required in the early years of repository to look at reprocessing of high level waste from SMRs, and how NWMO will look at those options.

Ms. Swami also provided an overview of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) scholarship program for women and requested Council's assistance in sharing word about the program in academic circles.

5. Item 5 was discussed in camera.

6. Item 6 was discussed in camera.

7. Visibility Strategy Update

Ms. Frizzell provided the Council with an update on NWMO's visibility strategy, with an emphasis on recent public attitude research.

Hill & Knowlton provided the Council with a presentation on recent public attitude research. Council discussed the public's trust levels in nuclear energy companies, scientists and engineers.

Council held some of its discussion in camera.

8. Preparing for Regulatory Processes

The Council was updated on the preparations being made by the NWMO for the federal Impact Assessment process and the licensing by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Management reported that the NWMO intends to launch the regulatory decision processes in 2024 with the selected host communities.

The Council heard that NWMO is in somewhat of a holding pattern while waiting for the Impact Assessment Agency to issue key guidance which is not expected until next year. Council members expressed concern about risks that a delay might cause NWMO. A Council member suggested that NWMO's impact assessment time frames were very optimistic considering the regulatory uncertainty associated with the new IA process. Council members also talked about possible ways other organizations and NWMO could communicate with government on this important topic. The Council will consider providing its thoughts on the topic through its Triennial Report. Council members generally discussed the federal government's position on energy and climate change issues.

9. Transportation Framework Update

Management provided the Council with an update on the release of the revised framework and preliminary transportation plan, and described the plans for 2022 engagement activities.

Council members discussed NWMO's plans to use the mobile transportation exhibit in the siting communities. There was some discussion around the importance of water and a Council member suggested that a physical exhibit related to water could be very helpful to improve the public's understanding of the subject. Management undertook to consider developing such an exhibit.

10. Standing reports

Updates were provided to Council members related to external landscape, Youth Engagement and Land Access.

A Council member asked if there were data to monitor the progress in the NWMO's youth engagement program. Management undertook to bring some data to the June meeting (*).

11. Report on Council of Elders & Youth and Municipal Forum Attendance

Dean Jacobs reported on his attendance at the recent Council of Elders and Youth meeting and Linda Thompson reported on her attendance at the recent Municipal Forum meeting.

12. APM Technical Overview

The Council was provided with highlights of technical activities since the last meeting which included updates on Geoscience fieldwork, Engineering, Transportation, and Safety & Technical Research.

The Council discussed NWMO's technical program, what stage NWMO is in development of surface water and storage systems and how the borehole testing data is being synthesized. Council members are very interested in seeing the NWMO Confidence in Safety documents and information related to the full-scale emplacement trial when available (*).

13. Update on Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste (ISRW)

Staff updated the Council on the development of a national strategy for all of Canada's radioactive waste (ISRW). Ms. Glenn reviewed the engagement work completed and the high-level results of those sessions. It was also reported that Natural Resources Canada had issued its radioactive waste policy for public comment.

A Council member cautioned that discussion around co-location of waste will most likely spark a demand for a cumulative effects assessment.

14. Next Meetings of the Advisory Council

The Council was presented with the 2022 meeting schedule.

15. Annual Letter to the Minister

The Council members reviewed and discussed their draft annual letter to the Minister. Council members suggested some revisions to the letter which will be made and be further reviewed by Council members (*).

16. Tracking Matrices – Annual & Triennial

The Council reviewed the annual tracking matrix for 2021 for posting on the NWMO website. Council members committed to further reviewing the public tracking matrix and providing feedback to the Board secretary (*).

Council members discussed the government decision-making process on APM and some of the challenges facing this process. A Council member suggested an update on Federal government relations at the next meeting (*).

17. Item 17 was discussed in camera.

18. In Camera Session

The Council held an in camera session.

The Chair declared the meeting terminated at 2:51 pm.

(*) indicates action items.

Dated the 13th day of June, 2022

David Cameron
Advisory Council Chair