

Advisory Council to the  
Nuclear Waste Management Organization

**Record of Discussion: March 22, 2021 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 22, 2021

Advisory Council Members Present:

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

NWMO Staff Present:

Laurie Swami	President and CEO (items 1-20)
Tareq Al-Zabet	Site Director, South Bruce (items 2-20)
Mahrez Ben Belfadhel	VP Site Selection ( <i>retiring</i> ) (items 1-20)
Jo-Ann Facella	Strategic Advisor, Community Engagement & Well-Being (items 2-20)
Lisa Frizzell	VP Communications (items 1-20)
Joe Gaboury	Director, Indigenous Engagement-Southern Ontario (items 2-11)
Bill Gascon	Site Director, Ignace (items 2-20)
Joe Heil	Director, Indigenous Engagement-Northern Ontario (items 4-20)
Sarah Hirschorn	Director, Geoscience (items 2-20)
Monica Kumar Dhoat	Assistant Board Secretary (2-20)
Gillian Morris	Board Secretary (items 1-20)
Lise Morton	VP Site Selection ( <i>incoming</i> ) (items 1-20)
Doug Taylor	VP & General Counsel (items 2-20)
Christina Vechsler	Director, Partnership & Senior Counsel (items 4-20)
Bob Watts	VP, Indigenous Relations & Strategic Programs (items 1-20)
Allan Webster	Director, Regulatory Affairs & Environmental Assessment (items 2-20)
Derek Wilson	VP Construction & Projects (items 2-20)

Guests:

Mr. Shawn Tupper	Associate Deputy Minister (ADM), Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) (item 1.5)
Mr. Jim Delaney	Director, Uranium and Radioactive Waste Division, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) (item 1.5)
Celia Milne	Triennial Report Writer (item 21)

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. Dr. Cameron welcomed Mr. Shawn Tupper and Mr. Jim Delaney from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) as well as the incoming VP of Site Selection, Lise Morton.

1.5 Meeting with Natural Resources Canada Associate Deputy Minister, Shawn Tupper

Mr. Tupper began his presentation by talking about the government's nuclear file which includes work on the next iteration of Small Modular Reactors (SMR) and related funding announcements as well as modernizing the waste management policy framework. Mr. Tupper complimented the NWMO and the Advisory Council's work as an innovative approach to public policy and is impressed by the work on NWMO's siting process to date. Mr. Tupper spoke about the need for clear, fact-based communication when it comes to nuclear and the importance of engaging the public to ensure they are well informed. Mr. Tupper also referenced Minister O'Regan's speech at the Canadian Nuclear Association which indicated clear support for nuclear energy.

Advisory Council members asked Mr. Tupper questions around;

- the role of nuclear in climate change;
- opportunities for government to raise awareness of NWMO's work;
- the level of knowledge of NWMO's work in various government departments;
- how NWMO could further engage government;
- the future of CANDU reactors; and
- the timelines for the NWMO work on the Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste and possible outcomes of that work.

Mr. Tupper and Mr. Delaney departed the meeting.

NWMO's new site directors Bill Gascon and Tareq Al-Zabet were introduced to the Council. Joe Heil, who was recently promoted to Director of Indigenous Engagement for Northwest Ontario and Joe Gaboury, Director of Indigenous Engagement in Southern Ontario were also introduced.

The Chair also took the opportunity to congratulate Dr. Mahrez Ben Belfadhel on his upcoming retirement and acknowledged his significant contributions to the NWMO's success to-date.

2. Safety Moment

Joe Gaboury provided the safety moment on Spring safety tips.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting / Action Items

The draft minutes and *in camera* minutes from the December 8, 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved by Council members. The actions list was also provided. In response to one of

the follow up action items, a Council member offered advice to improve the clarity of one of NWMO's technical questions on its website.

4. President's Report

The President provided the Council with her report discussing the challenges NWMO continues to face with issues related to COVID-19. Ms. Swami informed the Council of NWMO's plans for staff working in the Toronto office to return in early October with a "hybrid" work model with some staff continuing to work from home. Ms. Swami also reported on the plans for additional staff who will be located in the Siting Communities. The Council heard about recent developments related to small modular reactor (SMR) funding, a recent Globe and Mail article on NWMO and the outreach underway in the Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste (ISRW) initiative.

The Council discussed NWMO's challenges in engaging Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the ISRW initiative. Council members provided some advice for engaging CSOs through universities, public policy organizations, climate change departments and environmental scientists. A Council member offered to meet with the CEO to discuss the topic further (\*).

5. Update on APM Site Selection

The Council was provided with a progress update on engagement activities in the siting areas during the reporting period from December 2020 through February 2021.

The Council had a good discussion about the work under way with neighbouring communities and Indigenous communities. A Council member asked to be provided with the communication packages the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) has prepared regarding the APM project (\*).

Council members also briefly discussed some of the lessons learned from the OPG low and intermediate level waste DGR project.

Items 6, 7 & 8 were held In Camera

9. Reconciliation Policy Implementation Update

The VP of Indigenous Relations updated the Council regarding the implementation of the Reconciliation Policy and the progress related to Reconciliation. Mr. Watts reported that part 2 of NWMO's reconciliation training was being conducted in 2021 and NWMO continues to apply its reconciliation assessment tool to its governing documents.

The Council was pleased to see the organization's application of the Reconciliation assessment tool to a number of NWMO policies and procedures. The Council also discussed the appetite on both the Council of Elders and Youth and the Advisory Council to further develop their relationship.

Item 10 was held In Camera

11. Update on Transportation

The Council was updated on NWMO's draft transportation planning framework and was provided with a preview of NWMO's 2021 social transportation program.

A Council member was pleased to see that NWMO will initiate a community-based working group on this subject.

12. Media / Communications in the Communities

Management provided the Council with an update on NWMO's visibility strategy, including information about media and other communications in the communities.

A Council member asked if there has been messaging around the consequences of not implementing APM for used fuel. The Council also discussed whether NWMO had a national digital communication strategy suggesting that it may positively impact the process. A Council member suggested ways NWMO's government relations could be expanded and offered to provide further advice to management.(\*)

13. Preparing for Regulatory & Political Processes

The Council was provided with an overview of the preparations being made by the NWMO for the federal Impact Assessment process and the licensing by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). The Council heard that NWMO intends to launch these processes in 2024 with the selected host communities.

The Council discussed what role the CNSC and the Department of Transportation will play in the regulatory process. Council members supported NWMO's early engagement with the CNSC.

The Council also discussed the importance of weaving Indigenous knowledge together with western science and the benefit of keeping a watching brief on other projects that are making their way through the regulatory process. A Council member offered to share a case study of a project that has been through the IA process (\*).

14. Safety

The Council had requested additional briefings on topics related to safety and in an effort to be responsive to this request, management asked Council to further identify their topics of interest.

Council discussed the topics of interest which included.

- What is the public's definition of safety and what is being done to engage the public on defining the safety cases? What are the results of those specific steps?
- How are safety cases being modified or changed?;
- What are the gaps in societal knowledge in safety and how can these gaps be filled? (i.e. hydraulic conductivity);
- How is NWMO aligning its definition of safety with the public's definition? The siting communities' definitions?; and
- Safety in the above ground facilities at the DGR.

Management reported that it is assembling a working group on sustainability, Indigenous Knowledge and other topics and will report back to Council on this (\*). It was also reported that there will be an extensive multi-year regulatory process which examines all safety-related topics. Mr. Watts reported that management would report back to Council on safety topics twice a year.

15. Standing reports

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

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.

17. APM Technical Overview

The Council was provided with highlights of technical activities over the reporting period of December 2020 through February 2021 which included updates of site assessment, engineering and technical transportation, and regulatory approvals activities.

The Council members discussed the analysis of water samples from borehole drilling and what type of information would be gained from those samples.

18. Next Meetings of the Advisory Council

The Council was presented with the 2021 meeting schedule and discussed the possibility of an in-person meeting in the Fall.

19. Tracking Matrices – Annual & Triennial

The Council reviewed the annual tracking matrix for 2020 for posting on the NWMO website. Council members confirmed the document was complete for posting.

A Council member asked about the availability of the journey of water presentations or information on the subject of “water” on the NWMO website. Management advised the presentation was an in-person discussion and will look to ensure information about water is available on the website (\*).

20. Annual Letter to the Minister

The Council members were provided with the annual letter to the Minister and agreed with the content as presented, with a minor typographical correction.

21. In Camera Session

The Chair declared the meeting terminated at 2:10 pm.

(\*) indicates action items.

*Dated the 14<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021*

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David Cameron  
Advisory Council Chair