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NATIONAL CITIZEN'S DIALOGUE MAKING CHOICES

The NWMO is working with the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN) to learn more about Canadian values and expectations for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. The two organizations have partnered in a research project designed to hear the voices of Canadians who are not affiliated with organized stakeholder groups.

CPRN is an independent, not-for-profit, public policy research organization with a mission to create knowledge and lead public debate on social and economic issues important to the well-being of Canadians.

“Citizens need to be heard on important public policy issues”

— Judith Maxwell, CPRN President



Partnership: Judith Maxwell and Elizabeth Dowdeswell

“Citizens need to be heard on important public policy issues,” said Judith Maxwell, CPRN founder and president. “This dialogue provides an opportunity for people who do not belong to stakeholder groups to consider the long-term management of nuclear waste in a thoughtful and structured manner and to talk about what they value in determining a way forward.”

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WHAT CANADIANS ARE SAYING CONSIDERING THE QUESTIONS

Canadians are talking about *Asking the Right Questions? The Future Management of Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel*. The NWMO discussion document has prompted submissions to the organization's website and has been a focus of dialogue at engagement activities.

“We have been told that our process of ‘thinking out loud’ and seeking input from a broad-based constituency is a good one,” said NWMO president Elizabeth Dowdeswell. “People

are able to see their values reflected in the assessment method we've proposed. They also want to see how their input will be taken into account in the decision-making process,” she added.

Many people want to know more about the nature of radioactivity and its hazards. Others are raising questions about finance,

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OTHER COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

An intensive program of dialogue with Canadians is underway. Beyond the National Citizen's Dialogues, recent engagement initiatives include:

- national and regional dialogues bringing together representatives of organizations with a record of participation in nuclear and other public policy discussions,
- strategic alliances with national political aboriginal organizations to ensure that aboriginal people have an opportunity to be informed and assess the issues in accord with their value systems,
- opportunities for nuclear site communities to contribute their experiences, insights and perspectives and,
- increased use of the NWMO website, providing information for Canadians wherever they are, and inviting them to complete online surveys and polls and make electronic submissions.

Inputs from all NWMO engagement activities are continually integrated into the organization's work. Responses from Canadians to the first discussion document will be reflected in the second document slated for publication in late summer 2004. ■

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CPRN: NATIONAL CITIZENS DIALOGUE

CPRN convened citizen's dialogues on behalf of the NWMO in 12 communities across the country. Participants from all walks of life, representative of the population as a whole, were provided with baseline information about the issue and invited to consider some of the trade-offs and choices involved in deciding a nuclear waste management approach for the future.

The citizen's dialogues will provide the NWMO with a better understanding of the core values of Canadians. "Many people consider this to be a scientific or technical question," said NWMO president Elizabeth Dowdeswell. "But it's more than that. Ultimately Canada must adopt an integrated long-term nuclear waste management system that is built on sound science, is socially and



Sudbury: National Citizen's Dialogue

ethically acceptable to Canadians, and reflects their values."

Members of the NWMO Advisory Council and staff attended each of the citizen dialogues. Approximately 40 invitees participated in each session. The CPRN report will be publicly released when it is completed. ■

ASSESSMENT TEAM DESCRIBING THE APPROACHES

An Assessment Team has been convened to assist the NWMO in comparing alternative approaches for managing used nuclear fuel over the long term. Members of the group have extensive experience ranging from electric power planning and the siting of nuclear waste repositories to the design of decision-making processes that resonate with the public.

One of the team's first jobs is to describe the different long-term management approaches, complete with technical characteristics and the legal, institutional and management infrastructures needed to make them work. The intent is to make clear the differences between approaches.

The Assessment Team will also refine the ten key questions which emerged from early NWMO conversations with Canadians and develop them into assessment criteria. The assessment methodology will then be applied to each of the management approaches being studied to identify risks, costs and benefits of each and to describe the social, economic and ethical considerations associated with them.

Throughout the process the assessment team is integrating into its work the lessons being learned in the ongoing NWMO engagement activities. The team's report will be the subject of public review and dialogue when it is released. ■

 **Be Involved**

The NWMO wants Canadians to become involved and help shape its study of nuclear waste management approaches. We're using electronic and face-to-face methods to dialogue with you and ensure your values and concerns are considered. Let your ideas and perspectives be known.

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SPEAKING TO CANADIANS CHALLENGE TO INDUSTRY

Members of the Canadian Nuclear Association have been challenged to participate in the dialogue about long-term nuclear waste management. Speaking at the CNA annual seminar in Ottawa, NWMO president Elizabeth Dowdeswell said the dialogue must include the nuclear industry. She challenged industry members to contribute their knowledge to ensure that the study has a solid scientific and technical foundation.

In particular, Ms. Dowdeswell suggested the nuclear industry can contribute to the understanding of risk and uncertainty. "You can describe effectively the factual basis for any inherent risks posed by different decisions and the state of scientific uncertainty so that Canadians can understand the implications of their choices," she said. "And, of course,"

she added, "you can continue to seek and propose precautions."

Dowdeswell reminded the CNA membership that the NWMO is not simply designing a technical method for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. She said the issue calls for a comprehensive and integrated approach where good science is the platform on which a societal decision is made. ■



Challenge: Canadian Nuclear Association

THUNDER BAY

The NWMO president had an audience of a different sort when she travelled to Thunder Bay. A Lakehead University student was recruited to help expand the NWMO dialogue. Aaron Vallejo was one of more than a 100 people who attended Ms. Dowdeswell's talk launching the universities' 2004 Speakers Series.

An outdoor and recreation student, Mr. Vallejo stepped forward to describe a new global

strategy called "cradle to cradle." The concept involves creating products that become the raw material for building other products at the end of their useful lives.

Mr. Vallejo said he would like to learn more about "cradle to cradle" at an upcoming conference. Ms. Dowdeswell agreed to help by providing \$500 towards the student's attendance. In return, Mr. Vallejo will write a paper for the NWMO website.

Speaking about the NWMO mandate at the Lakehead Advanced Technology and Academic Centre, Ms. Dowdeswell said, "This is a most unusual question because it is asking us to develop public policy now that is going to be effective 10,000 years from now."

The Lakehead University discussion attracted considerable local print and broadcast media attention. "We were delighted not only with the media reception but also with the attendance!" said Lakehead Communications Director, Eleanor Abaya. ■



L to R - Elizabeth Dowdeswell,
Fred Gilbert, Lakehead University,
Colin Bruce, T-B Chronicle Journal

NWMO ABROAD

The NWMO is making an impression internationally. ANDRA, the National Radioactive Waste Management Agency in France, has taken an interest in the innovative NWMO approach to involving citizens in its study. The French agency sent a senior official to observe an NWMO Citizen Dialogue session in Moncton.

Jean-Cristophe Bardy is head of ANDRA's Public Relations and Information Department and serves on several other international nuclear waste management projects. France is at a similar stage as Canada in search of a long-term management approach. ANDRA is investigating strategic options and is expected to make a recommendation to the French parliament in 2006.

The International Association for Environmentally Safe Disposal of Radioactive Materials (EDRAM) is also following the NWMO study. The group has scheduled a two day meeting at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. One of the event highlights will be a half-day session on ethics led by NWMO president Elizabeth Dowdeswell. ■

NOTEWORTHY

Elizabeth Dowdeswell has been appointed to the leadership board of the new University of Calgary Institute for Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy. Among those joining Ms. Dowdeswell on the board are: Gwyn Morgan, president of EnCana Corp., Charlie Fischer, president of Nexen Inc., and Jim Grey, chair of the Canada West Foundation.

"These individuals bring a remarkable level of experience, expertise, leadership and prominence to ISEEE," said Robert Mansell, an advisor to the institute. In partnership with other universities, government and industry, the ISEEE will work to enhance interdisciplinary research, innovation and education on secure, competitive energy supplies for a clean environment and a strong economy.

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NOTEWORTHY ...continued from page 3

Neil McCrank, chair of the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board calls the ISEEE model a natural. "We have to find new ways of addressing energy demand in ways that will address environmental concerns as well as economic concerns from a sustainable point of view," he said. ■

**ANNUAL REPORT:
 FIRST FULL YEAR**

The first full year of NWMO activities is reviewed in the organization's second Annual Report. Entitled **From Dialogue to Decision: Managing Canada's Nuclear Fuel Waste**, the 2003 report discusses what the NWMO heard through the year, what it accomplished, and looks ahead at what it expects to do in 2004. The NWMO considers this report a statement of accountability.

The Annual Report, which includes audited financial statements for the year, is made public simultaneous with its submission to the Minister of Natural Resources Canada. It is also tabled in the House of Commons and the Senate within 15 sitting days after the Minister receives it.

A major milestone noted in the 2003 report was publication of the first of three NWMO documents for discussion: **Asking the Right Questions? The Future Management of Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel**. Significant activities which contributed to the discussion document are outlined. Among them are: a series of workshops and panels, a multi-session Scenarios Exercise, various international meetings, and wide-ranging engagement with interested Canadians.

2003 also saw the NWMO launch its website and begin posting an array of technical and conceptual background papers to inform the long-term used nuclear fuel management dialogue. ■

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WHAT CANADIANS ARE SAYING: CONSIDERING THE QUESTIONS

transportation and recycling. Although it is early to draw firm conclusions about a used nuclear fuel management approach acceptable to Canadians, a number of recurring themes are emerging.

People are unequivocal that the health of humans and the environment is at the top of their list. Safety and security, now and in the future, are a priority. They are also looking for a flexible approach that can be adapted or reversed to take advantage of new technologies or to provide future generations with options. An accountable and transparent governance structure is high on the list of expectations. And, continuous improvement with ongoing education and international collaboration are important considerations.

A primary purpose of the discussion document is to invite comment on how the NWMO proposes to assess long-term nuclear waste



Discussion Document 1

management options. The organization developed its proposal after listening extensively to Canadians and gathering the best available expertise – both scientific and social. It wants to know if the right questions are being asked and if the decision-making process being proposed is appropriate and understandable.

Asking the Right Questions? can be downloaded from the NWMO website. Copies of the document are available on request. ■

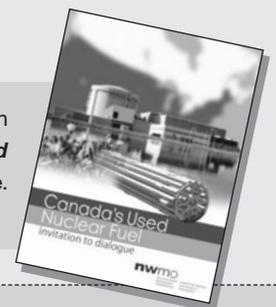
**CANADA'S USED NUCLEAR FUEL:
 INVITATION TO DIALOGUE**

The NWMO has gone digital. The organization has produced **Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel: invitation to dialogue**, a DVD primer on used nuclear fuel and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization.

Providing background material in video format is one more way the NWMO is informing

people and inviting their participation. The DVD introduces the organization and its mandate, describes the issue of used nuclear fuel in Canada, and outlines some of the questions Canadians might address when considering its long-term management. ■

Hosted by television personality Stephanie Brochart and produced in French and English by Harvest Television International, **Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel: invitation to dialogue** can be viewed on the NWMO website. DVD copies are available on request.



NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION