



PRESS RELEASE

NO EMBARGO

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**EXPERTS CHALLENGE GOVERNMENT'S ASSERTION THAT
RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEW
NUCLEAR WASTE 'WILL EXIST'**

Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates (NWAA), a group of experts with over 200 years of collective experience of the issues involved in nuclear waste, have submitted detailed written evidence to the House of Commons' Energy and Climate Change Select Committee Inquiry into the new suite of National Infrastructure Policy Statements, arguing that the national nuclear policy statement indicating government's intention to support new nuclear power stations in the UK is 'not fit for purpose'.

In a hard hitting document, NWAA argues that:

Four former members of the government's own Committee on Radioactive waste Management (CoRWM) – two of whom are members of NWAA - have previously written to the Secretary of State to say that in their opinion, *'It is unknowable whether or not effective arrangements (for the long term management of new build waste) will exist....'*

- The generic scientific grounds upon which the last attempt to dispose of radioactive waste at during the Rock Characterisation Facility programme in 1997 have not been resolved and are therefore still pertinent to the situation today
- Technical problems associated with a disposal facility are legion and most are recognised by the Environment Agency, thereby making any assertion of confidence in the disposability of radioactive waste premature
- Health impact assumptions from exposure to ionising radiation in UK are imprecise and the means by which they are calculated is more by 'educated guesswork' than by scientific evaluation
- Nuclear Decommissioning Authority assessments of the disposability of new build nuclear fuel have yet to be carried out by the lead environmental regulator, the Environment Agency, which means confidence expressed by government is potentially misplaced and certainly premature

- Reliance on experience abroad is no grounds for generating confidence as in Finland and elsewhere, disposal of waste is in its infancy and far from proven.
- No assessment has been made of the acceptability of radioactive waste management from the mining and milling of imported uranium, which Government consultants reveal currently produce over 90% of the ‘radiological dose detriment’ from the uranium fuel chain for modern reactor fuel

The document concludes:

In short, the Government’s conclusion “...that effective arrangements will exist to manage and dispose of the waste that will be produced from new nuclear power stations” is not supported by the evidence. The Nuclear National Policy Statement is, therefore, not “fit for purpose”.

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