

## **NEPLG FLU MEETING 12 September 2007**

Present: Bobby Ronnie and William Millar, Scottish Govt by  
teleconference  
Ian Moffat, BE  
Keith Pearce, Magnox South  
Pauline Dodd, Magnox North  
Bob Powell, NII  
Charles Branch, BERR  
Louise Robson, BERR

### **Current Govt Position**

Charles updated the meeting on the work being done by central Govt in preparation for a flu pandemic:

- Flu pandemic had been no.1 threat for the last two years, measured on likelihood, impact etc
- If an outbreak of avian flu coincides with an outbreak of seasonal flu, a pandemic could follow and planning assumptions are that it would reach the UK
- A vaccine would not be available until the second wave; its supplies would be limited in the first instance going to health workers and then the most vulnerable. Govt would prioritise according to need when they had a picture of the worst affected parts of the economy using information from key industries
- Garth Graham is the power sector representative on the "Flu Pandemic Business Forum"; it was agreed that feedback was not working very well to the nuclear industry
- Work was ongoing on the National Flu Plan, with a clinical attack rate planned at 25% with the potential to rise to 50%
- Work was also being carried out to identify regulations that could be relaxed in the event.

The following points were raised in discussion:

Each power station has critical groups of workers e.g. control room staff and it was possible to look at training them to cover across sites, so that stations could be kept running where needed

BE wanted to see some strategic decisions taken about relaxation of regulations e.g. on staffing cf. banks have undertaken to ensure that one branch will remain open in a location, using well staff from other banks  
NII suggested that industry could identify the critical elements of their infrastructure in relation to key interdependencies in the national picture with regard to the relaxations they would want to see and then to raise them with NII.

There were questions raised about suspension of the market and evidence shows that this has happened previously. Additionally, Emergency Powers could be taken.

### **Other Planning and Progress**

Magnox have produced a company standard setting out what needs to be considered when writing a plan; have conducted an exercise with staff randomly removed; and using the lessons from that, a plan has been produced for Oldbury. It focuses in particular on Communications, including a helpline for staff.

This raises strategic questions e.g.

- If there were no Emergency Planning support, would they shut down?
- Given also that information would be limited on other agencies' staffing levels, what constitutes the level of resource required to deliver the minimum national response capability?
- Is maintenance of Emergency Response Capability a key requirement of the organisations that make up the nuclear multi agency response?

In Scotland a Group is looking at all sectors in terms of awareness and planning. Work is ongoing to identify interdependencies and a workshop was planned for 18 September. Scotland is planning for a 50% staff absence rate.

UK Oil and Gas has done some work on control rooms and how to keep them open including testing that personnel going off shore are not carrying the virus.

BE has considered several strands: whether the Company doctor can prescribe drugs to staff and decided not to go down that route; absenteeism levels; travel; meetings; canteens etc and passing on the virus internally. It has also taken a look at staff communications with a view to countering media misinformation. They are addressing detailed issues e.g. interface with COBR and plan to do more work through plugging into industry groups.

### **Actions and Future Work**

**Action: Louise to establish why the nuclear industry is not linked into E3c and to address that.**

DH has a comprehensive comms plan in place.

**Action: Charles to share reporting templates, UK Comms plan, and BERR comms plan.**

It was agreed that operators should look at pinchpoints e.g. fuel dwell time, mains water, CO2 and grid stability to assess whether there is anything that should be addressed prior to any flu pandemic.

**Action: Operators to consider pinchpoints as above.**

**Action: Operators to identify suggested areas for regulatory relaxation to NII**

**Action: Charles to try to establish COBR/BERR information requirements and how information will be collected, to allow operators to plan how their emergency suites could be managed.**

**Action: Media Sub Group to address groundwork on prepared statements.**

**Action: Charles to address the extent to which policy has been developed on the market and generation.**

**Action: Bob to address OCNS's business continuity planning and establish how that might dovetail with this work.**

**Action: Louise to arrange a meeting in November to brainstorm and address interdependencies to include current membership plus John Skegg, someone from OCNS (Bob) and someone from Oldbury (Keith).**