



Plan

Framework for a
Communications and Public
Consultation Plan
**Periodic Updating of the
Public on the
Comprehensive
Preliminary
Decommissioning Plan for
Chalk River Laboratories
3600-07440-PLA-001
Revision 1**

2005 December

Décembre 2005

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Release and Revision History / Liste des documents et des révisions

0939B Rev. 13

Document Details / Détails sur le document

Title
Titre

Total no. of pages
Nbre total de pages

Framework for a Communications and Public Consultation Plan

Release and Revision History / Liste des documents et des révisions

Release Document No./N°	Date	Revision Révision	No./N°	Date	Purpose of Release; Details of Rev./Amendement Objet du document; détails des rév. ou des modif.	Prepared by Rédigé par	Reviewed by Examiné par	Approved by Approuvé par
1	2005 Mar	R0		2005 Mar	Issued for Review and Comment	B. A. Lange	G.M. Dolinar G. Sotirov D. Roach D. Coffin	D. Roach
2	2005 Dec	R1		2005 Dec	Revised as a result of feedback from the Commission and sent for signature and issue	D. Roach	G.M. Dolinar B.A. Lange G. Sotirov G. Archinoff D. Coffin B. McGee	W.C.H. Kupferschmidt

DCS/RMS Input / Données SCD ou SGD

Rel. Proj. Proj. conn.	Project Projet	SI	Section	Serial Série	Sheet Feuille	Of De	Unit No.(s) Tranche n°
	3600		07440	001	No. N°	1	1

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1. INTRODUCTION

AECL's Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) site is large and diverse and contains many structures and features, some dating back to the beginning of the site's first establishment in 1944. The site is expected to continue in operation as a licensed facility for a wide range of nuclear R&D and industrial and production activities for many years to come. Several of the original structures have been decommissioned over the life of the site and the decommissioning of specific facilities is expected to continue in the future, as structures age or as business needs change. Also, the site has seen new structures and facilities installed to meet business and other needs. This too is expected to continue for many years to come. In other words, structures and facilities will be built while others are decommissioned over the site's operational life, subject to regulatory oversight and control. For planning purposes the reference operational life of the site, during which time selective decommissioning will take place, is assumed to be approximately 100 years (2000–2100).

In addition to effectively managing the site's decommissioning activities as well as all other aspects of AECL's operations, it is incumbent upon AECL to openly share information and details as well as to seek input from its many stakeholders on AECL's Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan (CPDP) for the Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) (see Appendix A). While AECL will share this information on an ongoing basis as part of its overall communications program, the CPDP will be reviewed and updated on a five-year basis or as significant developments dictate that an update is warranted. The process used in consulting and communicating with the public on these updates is described in this document. The process is based on the approach utilized by AECL when undertaking major initiatives requiring communications and consultation, and takes into account feedback from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and community stakeholders. Attention has been paid to particular comments expressed at a Commission public hearing on 2005 May 20 to review the financial guarantee for decommissioning AECL's facilities at Chalk River and these have been incorporated into this document.

As noted in the 2005 May public hearing, AECL respects that members of various agencies and public interest groups outside of the immediate area are also interested in Chalk River's operations and want to be included in the process. Continued input from these important stakeholders is both appreciated and critical to the success and continuous improvement of the consultation program. In this regard, AECL will supplement its established information-sharing program associated with all aspects of site operations with details and information on the CPDP as noted in section 2.5. In addition, AECL will establish an Environmental Stewardship Council that will look at issues of mutual concern on all aspects of site operations, including the CPDP. Invitations to participate in the Council will be extended to community stakeholders neighbouring Chalk River Laboratories and to interested parties outside of the immediate vicinity.

The described process is not intended to replace the public consultation conducted under CEAA (Canadian Environmental Assessment Act) for a specific physical activity or a newly proposed project at Chalk River.

2. COMMUNITY RELATIONS' ACTIVITIES DURING THE REVIEW AND UPDATING OF THE CRL COMPREHENSIVE PRELIMINARY DECOMMISSIONING PLAN

The proactive dissemination of information to community stakeholders, as well as consultation with and input from these stakeholders, are important components to the overall decommissioning planning process at CRL. Therefore, it is incumbent upon AECL to ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to review and comment on the updated CPDP, to offer ideas and information that could influence decisions and recommendations, and for AECL to consider this input, make appropriate changes to the plan and respond to and alleviate any concerns.

2.1 Objectives for Communications and Public Consultation Program

The objectives of this ongoing program are four-fold:

- to provide community stakeholders with regular updates on CRL's planned decommissioning activities and on progress on activities underway or completed;
- to foster an open dialogue with all stakeholders on the decommissioning planning process;
- to provide opportunities for community stakeholders to offer input and comments to AECL's Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan for the Chalk River Laboratories; and
- for AECL to consider stakeholder input and modify its plans as appropriate and to communicate the results of the consultation program to stakeholders.

2.2 Community Stakeholders

CRL's community stakeholders are varied and representative of a number of groups, including:

- AECL employees/unions
- Elected officials in Renfrew and Pontiac Counties (e.g., federal, provincial, municipal)
- Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn (the First Nations community in Golden Lake)
- General Public
- Public Interest Groups and Environmentally-focused Organizations and Agencies (e.g., Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County, Sierra Club, Greenpeace, Ottawa Riverkeeper, Ottawa Vanier Greens/Verts et Vertes d'Ottawa Vanier, Citizens for Renewable Energy, Ducks Unlimited, Ministry of the Environment, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment Canada)
- Appointed Officials/Agencies (e.g., Chief Medical Officer of Health, Emergency Management Ontario)
- Corporate Partners (e.g., National Research Council, MDS Nordion)
- Media
- Environmental Stewardship Council
- Public Hearing Interveners
- the Shareholder (Natural Resources Canada)

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) staff will be kept apprised of activities and they will be invited as observers to briefings and meetings as appropriate.

The above list is not exclusive. AECL's list of community stakeholders will continue to evolve as new organizations and interested members of the public identify themselves.

2.3 Initiation of the Process

All stakeholders will be notified of the proposed update at the beginning of the process. Depending upon the extent to which the Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan has been revised, notification mechanisms would include:

- notification of the update to employees through the current internal communications methods;
- a letter and/or email providing advance notice of the town hall meeting dates and locations, as well as an offer to provide a full briefing to elected federal, provincial, county and municipal officials. This ensures that all officials are aware of the update before it starts so that they can answer constituents' questions and AECL can receive their comments early in the process;
- a letter and/or email providing advance notice of the town hall meeting dates and locations, as well as an offer to provide a full briefing to First Nations communities;
- a letter and/or email providing advance notice of the town hall meeting dates and locations, as well as an offer to provide a full briefing to environmentally-focused groups and agencies;
- newspaper ads announcing the update and advertising the town hall meeting dates and locations;
- posting of all relevant information on AECL's external website – www.aecl.ca;
- interactions with the media (as noted in section 2.5) advising them of the update (this could include media advisories, phonecalls, offers of interviewees); and
- establishing dates for meetings and coordinated tours of the site with proactive invitations to stakeholders.

2.4 Communication Tools and Materials

In order to meet the information needs of our stakeholders, a range of information tools and materials would be utilized. This would include:

- opinion polls and focus group meetings to identify common concerns and to benchmark the level of awareness of programs and issues;
- printed materials such as fact sheets, news articles, key messages, Questions and Answers issued and distributed directly to community stakeholders as well as posted on AECL's internal and external website;
- regular updating of the Decommissioning, Waste Management and Site Projects section of the internal and external websites;
- video/posters/Powerpoint presentations for town hall meetings;
- site tours;
- regular updates through a quarterly community newsletter;
- an annual Report to the Community that highlights decommissioning progress at Chalk River;
- town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns; and

- an annual meeting with the Shareholder and members of the public in Ottawa.

Information materials will contain a description of the CRL Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan update process, explanations of the purpose of and need for the update, progress on the Plan and other relevant information. All information materials will be available in both official languages.

2.5 Information Channels

A variety of delivery mechanisms will be used to disseminate information to community stakeholders and to obtain their input and feedback. Some mechanisms will be used for all audiences and some may be audience-specific and are noted as follows:

AECL Employees/Unions

As ambassadors for the company, it is critical that AECL employees be kept fully apprised of the update process on an ongoing basis. The mechanisms that will be used to keep employees apprised are:

- preliminary notification and updates as noted in section 2.3;
- information updates via management/union meetings;
- employee bulletins, to inform of significant milestones;
- site-wide presentations; and
- information posted to AECL's internal website.

Elected Officials

Elected officials at the federal, provincial, county and municipal levels will be provided with information as soon as practicable as well as throughout the process. Their awareness must be maintained so they can provide AECL with their comments from the beginning and so they can respond to constituents' questions as the update proceeds. Examples of methods of information dissemination to elected officials include:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- briefings to elected federal and provincial representatives in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and Pontiac Counties, planned to coincide with their presence for riding activities;
- presentations at Renfrew County and Pontiac County monthly meetings;
- briefings to individual municipal councils;
- ongoing updates at the community liaison meetings with municipal councils;
- tours of the CRL site; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn (First Nations)

AECL will continue to inform and seek input from the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn of Golden Lake, the only neighbouring First Nations' community to CRL, through:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- briefings to Council;
- invitations to tour the CRL site;
- ongoing communication via telephone; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

General Public

Local area residents and the wider area public with an interest in the update process will be kept informed of the update process on an ongoing basis. Some of the mechanisms for information dissemination to the public include:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- a regularly updated Decommissioning and Waste Management section on AECL's external website;
- information repositories, where the public can access updated process information (e.g., public libraries, municipal council offices, etc.);
- community displays;
- videos;
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns;
- a community newsletter that features a specific column on the Decommissioning, Waste Management and Site Projects Organizational Unit with particular focus on the Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan;
- an annual Report to the Community that highlights decommissioning progress at Chalk River; and
- newspaper articles and interviews.

Public Interest Groups and Environmentally-focused Organizations and Agencies

The many stakeholders represented in this section (see section 2.2) will be kept directly informed of the update process, through:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- offers to provide briefings to their organizations;
- invitations to tour the CRL site;
- ongoing communication via telephone; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

AECL respects that members of various agencies outside of the immediate area are also interested in Chalk River's operations. In addition to the activities noted above, AECL will undertake to hold an annual town hall meeting in Ottawa to update and seek comments from

members of Public Interest Groups on the current status of the program as well as to seek membership on the Environmental Stewardship Council.

Appointed Officials

Appointed officials, such as the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Emergency Management Ontario and other appropriate personnel, will be kept apprised of the update process, as it affects their activities and responsibilities, through:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- offers to provide briefings;
- invitations to tour the CRL site;
- ongoing communication via telephone; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

Corporate Partners

As tenants on the Chalk River site and valued corporate partners, it is important that the National Research Council and MDS Nordion are kept aware of developments at CRL. They would therefore be advised through:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- offers to provide briefings;
- invitations to tour the areas under consideration;
- ongoing communication via telephone; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

Media

Ongoing communication with the media is an important component of any Communications Plan since the media are both a stakeholder and a means for information dissemination. Following the initiation of the update process, communications with the media will be ongoing and may include a briefing, an information kit, regular updates as the update process proceeds, site visits, articles (as appropriate), and specific opportunities for discussion of the details of the update process (e.g., town hall meetings). Designated spokespersons will be available to respond to queries from the media and all media stories will be collected and documented.

A non-exclusive list of media outlets to be used for information dissemination is noted in Appendix B.

Environmental Stewardship Council

With the continued evolution of Chalk River's Community Relations program, initiatives are underway to form an Environmental Stewardship Council in early 2006 that would comprise AECL staff, members of Public Interest Groups and interested members of the public. The

intention is to have the Council openly discuss matters of mutual interest to both AECL and the community, to look for solutions to remediate and/or continually improve AECL's environmental performance and to provide an ongoing and consistent method of two-way interactions with community stakeholders. The Council will be provided with:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- offers to provide briefings;
- invitations to tour the CRL site;
- ongoing communication via telephone; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

In addition there would be regularly held sessions with the Council on matters of interest to its membership, including feedback from AECL on how the Council's concerns were being addressed.

Public Interveners

AECL values the input from citizens at its licensing meetings. In this regard, AECL will undertake to advise those interveners (where contact information is available) of activities through:

- preliminary notification as noted in section 2.3;
- provision of newspaper ads prior to publication and new website materials;
- offers to provide briefings;
- invitations to tour the CRL site; and
- invitations to town hall meetings that promote information sharing and provide opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions/concerns.

The Shareholder

It is important that our Shareholder be kept apprised of activities. Wherever possible, communication will be ongoing with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). In addition to the activities noted below, AECL will undertake to hold an annual meeting in Ottawa to update NRCan staff, Treasury Board and other departments and MPs and their staff on the current status of the program. Following the annual meeting, invitations would be issued to interested individuals to tour the CRL site.

CNSC

AECL recognizes the importance of keeping the CNSC well informed on issues that may be important to the CNSC in terms of communications with the public. Therefore, initiatives surrounding the updating of the public on the Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan will be communicated through regularly scheduled meetings with CNSC staff. Invitations to town hall meetings will be extended as appropriate.

2.6 Public Consultation Process

The community and general public must be an integral part of the two-way communications process. The public must have the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions, express concerns, or raise issues at any time as the CPDP continues. This also provides AECL with the opportunity to incorporate public input into the update process, to respond to concerns, and to mitigate or resolve issues that are important to the public.

The primary focus would continue to be on the communities nearest the Chalk River Laboratories site as they would be the most affected by the activities supporting the Comprehensive Preliminary Decommissioning Plan. AECL will arrange an annual meeting in Ottawa or attend meetings as invited by communities further afield. In all instances, mechanisms will be put into place so that the public will have opportunities to provide comments and other feedback both at specific events and in an ongoing manner throughout the update process. These consultation mechanisms will include one or more of the following, depending on the community and its expressed needs:

- opinion polls and focus group meetings;
- public notices in newspapers and other locations, with information on how to comment on the update process;
- questionnaires/comment forms at specific events, such as town hall meetings;
- contact information (e.g. address, phone number), to be included on all printed information materials, notices, etc;
- town hall meetings, widely advertised in both official languages through the media and community newsletter. Potential venues might include Deep River, Petawawa, Pembroke, Cobden, Barry's Bay, Eganville, Renfrew and Arnprior in Renfrew County, and Chapeau in Pontiac County;
- annual meetings with the Shareholder and the public held in the City of Ottawa; and
- a virtual consultation forum on www.aecl.ca. This would include an inventory of all questionnaires, comments, as well as electronic feedback surveys and automatic notifications.

A high-level schedule of key components of the Consultation Program is shown in Appendix A.

2.7 Tracking and Recording

Comments, questions, issues and other feedback will be tracked and recorded. AECL will reply directly to all individuals/organizations who submit comments/questions and issues for review. Responses to letters, phone calls and e-mails (where the author and other identifying information are included), and measures taken to mitigate or resolve issues will be posted on www.aecl.ca <<http://www.aecl.ca>> and made available to municipal offices and libraries.

2.8 Questions and Issues Management

For the purposes of the Communications Plan, an issue is defined as something that could impact the update process or the parties involved in it (which could ultimately affect the update process). For the update process, the impact could be on its outcome, timing, cost, etc. For the parties involved, the impact could be on credibility or reputation.

Where issues arise, AECL will attempt to identify the issue, determine its basis or roots, assess its implications and, if possible, identify means to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the concerned parties and the public.

2.9 Assessment and Evaluation

The Communications and Consultation Program will not be static. The program will be reviewed regularly (with input from the Environmental Stewardship Council) as it progresses and its effectiveness measured, based on public input and other factors. Revisions to the program may be required to incorporate input from the public through the consultation process, to adapt to changing needs or circumstances, to accommodate new information, or in response to other factors. Similarly, prior to each five-year update of the CPDP, the Communications Program will be reviewed and modified based on lessons learned from any previous update processes.

2.10 Documentation

All communications will be recorded to ensure that external input to the update process and responses or follow-up can be traced and tracked, and to assure the CNSC of the scope and effectiveness of the public information and consultation activities. All Communications Plans, printed media, presentations, briefing material, correspondence (written, telephone and electronic), follow-up actions or communications, meeting records and reports shall be treated as records.

Public meetings will be recorded in a formal report that will be reviewed by the AECL participants before release and subsequently made available to all interested parties and posted on AECL's external website as a public document. The document will contain the following information:

- who the AECL contacts are;
- copies of letters to stakeholders;
- copies of ads and their placement schedules;
- the dates, meeting times and locations of town hall meetings;
- copies of the town hall meeting participant registration forms;
- activities, presentations and information offered;
- a record of discussions, questions, requests for information, comments, suggestions and concerns;
- a record of information provided to guests;
- commitments for follow-up; and
- copies of media interactions (e.g., questions/answers, copies of published articles).

Names of persons providing input to the update process will be recorded, along with their interest in the update process, to the extent that these are declared or known. Public input will normally be included in public documents in statistical form, but names of persons may be listed if the persons have declared their name in a public forum or are acting in the capacity of a public official.

Appendix A

Schedule for Consultation Program Implementation

	2006/07				2007/08				2008/09				2009/10				2010/11				2011/12											
	A	M	J	J	F	M	A	M	A	M	J	J	F	M	A	M	A	M	J	J	F	M	A	M	A	M	J	J	F	M	A	M
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Municipal Meetings																																
Community Newsletter																																
Environmental Stewardship Council																																
Town Hall Meetings																																
Opinion Polls																																

Appendix B

Potential Media Organizations for Information Dissemination*

Print Media

- The North Renfrew Times
- The [Pembroke] Daily Observer
- The Petawawa Post
- The Eganville Leader
- The Cobden Sun
- Barry's Bay This Week
- The Arnprior Chronicle-Guide
- The Renfrew Mercury
- The Shawville Equity
- The Pontiac Journal
- The Ottawa Citizen
- The Ottawa Sun
- The Globe and Mail
- La Presse
- Le Devoir
- Le Droit

Electronic media

- OttawaValley.com

Radio

- STAR (96.7 FM)
- myFM (104.9 FM)
- CHIP (101.7 FM)
- the Bear (99.7 FM in the Ottawa Valley and 106.9 FM in Ottawa)
- CBC (92.5 FM)

TV

- A-Channel (Pembroke has Ottawa feed)
- CTV (CJOH)
- Global (Ottawa)
- the Weather Channel

* This list is representative and subject to change as media organizations change or new organizations come on line.