NEWS AND INFORMATION

The UK's National Dose Assessment Working Group (NDAWG)

To cite this article: Wayne Oatway 2012 J. Radiol. Prot. 32 525

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News and information

The UK’s National Dose Assessment Working Group (NDAWG)

The UK National Dose Assessment Working Group (NDAWG) was set up in 2002 by the Health Protection Agency (HPA), the Environment Agency (EA), the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) (now the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)) as a result of a recommendation in the consultative exercise on dose assessments (CEDA) organised by the FSA. To mark its 10 years of existence, and to celebrate the launch of its new website (www.ndawg.org), members of NDAWG feel that now is a good time to highlight, to the wider radiation protection community, some of the work NDAWG has produced.

The aim of NDAWG is to bring together people and organisations with responsibility for and/or an interest in the assessment of radiation doses to the public from the operation of the nuclear industry and from minor users of radioactivity. Membership of NDAWG is by invitation and covers Government Departments and Agencies, industries discharging radioactive materials, specialists and representatives from NGOs. A steering group has been set up to oversee the technical aspects of the running of NDAWG.

One of the main aims of NDAWG is to promote the use of best practice and consistent methodologies in dose assessment, focusing on past, present and future authorised discharges and direct radiation. NDAWG achieves this through holding regular meetings at which invited speakers present papers on topics of interest, including developments within the wider context of the European Union or the ICRP, and also through publication of material on its website. This material includes reports and, following a recommendation from an open meeting held in 2006, guidance notes on good practice in dose assessments.

NDAWG guidance notes are intended to be the collective opinion of the Group and it is hoped that they will find wide application in the UK and be of interest elsewhere. In order to ensure that this is the case a period of consultation is held for each guidance note to obtain comments from interested parties. Currently, NDAWG has published six guidance notes on its website and these are listed below. The seventh guidance note, on the use of habits data in prospective dose assessments, will be published soon.

- Guidance note 1: overview of guidance on the assessment of radiation doses from controlled releases.
- Guidance note 2: guidance on initial/simple assessment tools.
- Guidance note 4: guidance on considering uncertainty and variability in radiological assessments.
- Guidance note 5: the estimation and use of results on exposure to direct radiation.

Items for inclusion in this section are welcomed and should be sent to the Deputy Editor, Jim Gray, at the address given at the front of this issue.
• Guidance note 6: guidance on short term release assessments.

Further information on the work of NDAWG, including access to published reports and guidance notes, can be found on its website (www.ndawg.org).

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