

National Geological Screening Independent Review Panel

Purpose

The National Geological Screening Independent Review Panel (hereafter 'the Independent Review Panel') will review and evaluate the national screening guidance that Radioactive Waste Management Limited (hereafter 'RWM') is to develop and apply nationally.

Overview of remit

The remit of the Independent Review Panel will be in two phases.

1. Initially, it will assess whether the national geological screening guidance:
 - Is geologically and technically sound;
 - Can be applied using existing geological information; and
 - Provides a basis for assessing the prospects for developing a long-term safety case in a range of geological settings to accommodate the UK inventory of higher activity waste.

This assessment will be achieved through open discussion and engagement with the developer, the public and interested stakeholders¹.

2. A second phase of work will follow finalisation of the guidance, in relation to its application across England, Wales and Northern Ireland (in 2015/2016). The Independent Review Panel will assess whether the guidance has been applied accurately and consistently, and in a manner likely to engender public confidence.

Process

As set out in the 2014 White Paper, the UK Government has asked the Geological Society of London (hereafter 'GSL') to oversee the establishment of the Independent Review Panel, having access to a broad range of well-respected national and international geoscience expertise and other learned bodies.

The Independent Review Panel will report to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (hereafter 'DECC') after each phase of its work. DECC will provide reasonable secretarial and logistical support, including helping to facilitate public and stakeholder engagement. GSL is happy to host plenary and panel meetings, subject to room availability.

GSL has indicated that it expects a maximum of six members to serve on the Independent Review Panel.

Each panel member might spend up to five days on this work in Phase 1 (e.g. one day for panel meetings; one day for a plenary meeting; and three days for review of documentation, research, correspondence and writing reports).

¹ NB: The Independent Review Panel will not be the only means of scrutinising the draft guidance. The draft guidance will also be subject to public consultation by the developer during 2015.

Timetable

It is expected that the initial review of the screening guidance (Phase 1) will be completed by April 2015, with a possible plenary meeting of the Independent Review Panel with RWM in March / April 2015. Should the Independent Review Panel have any serious concerns about the draft guidance, which necessitated fundamental changes and a further round of review, Phase 1 could be extended.

It is not yet possible to set out a detailed timetable for reviewing the application of the screening guidance (Phase 2), but this will take place following finalisation of the guidance and is expected to extend into 2016.

Panel members' expenses

DECC will pay reasonable travel and subsistence costs for all members of the panel. DECC will give sympathetic consideration to requests for recompense for loss of earnings in the case of panel members who are independent consultants², on a basis to be agreed prior to confirmation of the membership of the panel.

**GDF team, Department of Energy and Climate Change
Geological Society of London**

² It is expected that academics taking on such work would do so as part of their normal portfolio of activities. Those working for companies should only be doing so with the support of their employer.

Annex - Travel and subsistence guidance

Process

We assume that members of the independent panel (or their parent organisations) will be making their own travel and accommodation arrangements, rather than this being managed centrally. DECC will meet the travel and subsistence costs, subject to the guidance outlined below.

All travel and subsistence claims should be made to DECC promptly, normally within one month of the date of travel. Claims must include explanation and justification of the expense. Receipts are required. Where no receipt is available this should be explained in the claim.

In exceptional circumstances the department may reimburse expenses that exceed the maximums detailed below – if, for example, a member has no choice where they can purchase a meal and it has cost more than the maximum.

Travel

Before making travel arrangements, please consider:

- Whether the journey is really necessary, especially if it involves extensive travelling;
- Whether you could conduct business in any other way, e.g. video conference / phone;
- Maximising value for money e.g. by booking your ticket well in advance.

Rail travel

Members should travel using standard class only unless there is a clear business need for travelling by first class for example:

- Where first class is cheaper than standard class;
- Where there are no standard class seats left on the train in which you need to travel;
- Where there are no standard class facilities to accommodate disabled or other special needs requirements.

Members are expected to take advantage of concessionary rates and of advance booking where it is realistic to do so.

Air travel

For air travel all members should travel using economy class only unless there is a clear business or practical case for premium economy or business class. The air ticket obtained should be the cheapest that can be obtained.

All UK domestic air travel should be authorised **in advance**.

No first-class air travel can be authorised under any circumstances.

Taxi fares

Taxi fare may be reimbursed, but only where the circumstances relate to difficulties with relying on public transport (location or time of day, carrying heavy bags). Where

this is the case, it needs to be justified on the claim form. On the face of it, it is difficult to justify use of taxis in London, or into any city/town served by rail.

Accommodation and subsistence

Accommodation

Accommodation claims will be based on actual costs. Accommodation booked by a member, who intends to reclaim the cost from DECC, should be of the standard required to permit work to be done in comfortable, quiet conditions.

The maximum costs for hotel and bed and breakfast stays are £125 per night for London based establishments and £85 per night for those based outside of London.

Subsistence

Claims should be made on the basis of actual expenditure. The best guide is that the cost of daytime meal(s) taken away from home should be *reasonable*.

By way of guidance, the below indicates the maximum costs that DECC will reimburse for their own staff during the period of required travel period:

Travelling during the day (no overnight stay):

- up to £4.50 for the cost of breakfast (if this is not provided);
- up to £4.50 for the cost of lunch or an additional meal (if this is not provided);
- up to £14.50 for the cost of dinner (if this is not provided);
- £5 for incidentals such as newspapers and laundry.