

OUTLOOK Nuclear Waste committee CoRWM set to report findings on Monday

The conclusions of all national waste policy committees are identical.

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The independent body set up to debate what to do with the UK's current stock of nuclear waste will report its findings on Monday.

The Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM), appointed by the UK government, has been working on the problem since March 2003 and its findings are likely to be of critical importance to the 70 bln stg-plus programme of nuclear decommissioning and the anticipated new generation of nuclear power stations.

CoRWM's main focus is on what to do with the waste left by the UK's current stock of aging nuclear power stations. Observers in the nuclear industry say the committee is likely to recommend 'geological disposal' of the waste, which essentially means burying it deep beneath the ground and sealing it.

However, CoRWM is known to favour new interim storage facilities for the waste in order to allow time for a permanent facility, which may not be in use until 2040.

The committee said in its interim report in April: 'The committee recognises that the process leading to the creation of suitable facilities for disposal may take several decades and should therefore be underpinned by robust interim storage.'

CoRWM has said it hopes that 'host communities'— which could be areas that already have nuclear facilities— will volunteer to take some of the interim facilities.