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30th November 2009

Lucy Yates
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Dear Lucy

RAWP Evaluation Project

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this evaluation.

BAA has been a very strong supporter of the managed aggregate supply and the associated RAWP system since we were founded ten years ago. We have active and participative BAA member company representation (and back-ups) on each of the six individual regional RAWPs in England which we coordinate through our own association Planning Group. BAA is also represented through the national technical and coordinating groups which meet from time to time under the auspices of your department.

We see this process as a win-win on government costs and continued funding for a further four years is clearly the appropriate option.

It has positive benefits to the public on impacts for the following reasons:

1. There is a very low propensity on the industry side to reach for their barristers and go down the Judicial Review route versus the Treasury Solicitor, thus saving government huge amounts of time and cost when things go wrong, such as when an application is refused and the planning appeal is unsuccessful. This is because the industry as a whole is part of the technical end of the system, so the outcomes of potential and actual planning applications can be accurately predicted with a high level of certainty at the individual operator technical level, leaving only the vagaries of the political system to give rise to unpredictable outcomes. The very small government spend on the RAWPs saves large Judicial Review costs and other negatives which an adversarial system would produce. .

2. The RAWP system enables the impartial technical and professional experts (government, planners and industry working together) outside the political arena to facilitate data collection and maintain and ensure the national resource needs of aggregates are made available to meet government policy at local and national level; and advise and recommend relevant technical guidance to speed up the process of continuous improvement in the area of negative impacts of quarrying, as technology moves forward. The system has responded and adapted positively and pragmatically to a continuing process of change and refinement to look for continuous improvements.

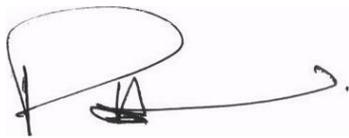
The alternative to return to a pre-Verney Report free-for-all would be catastrophic and costly and could easily threaten the future steady supply of mineral particularly to the resource-short London and south east and in the more difficult times than those of 40-50 years ago!

It is noted that whilst a future change of government might reconsider and possibly abandon the regional structure set up by the current Labour government this should not have a particular bearing on the RAWP structure as the six RAWP regions were already in place pre-1997.

Our response to your questionnaire specific and individual questions is attached.

If you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours Sincerely



Peter Huxtable Secretary



Questionnaire/ questions for discussion

1. Existing RAWPs

- Do you think the current membership of RAWPs is balanced?

YES. It needs to be made up of the relevant technical expertise to make informed judgements. There is advantage from time to time in enabling other stakeholders and parties to participate in specific presentations eg Environment Agency on water issues. In fact the use of the RAWPs meeting could enable various useful presentations and useful interchanges on a variety of related topics.

- Do you think the current functions of RAWPs are reasonable? Are any changes required and, if so, what?

YES, but there is inevitably some variation between the performance, *modus operandi* and effectiveness of different RAWPs and some way of balancing this upwards is required.

- Are the current terms of reference appropriate and necessary?

YES

2. Role of Secretaries to the RAWPs

- Is the current role of the Secretary adequate?

YES. Convener, minute-writer and coordination with other groups are the key functions.

- In your opinion, is the role of the Secretary essential, useful or needless? Why?

Essential and useful to achieve the key functions above.

- Could the role be improved or expanded? If so, how?

Important to ensure that key elements and potential problems or difficulties are consistently and systematically flagged-up and

communicated through the system and to CLG and other relevant bodies.

- Is the level of support provided to the Secretaries adequate? If not, how could it be improved?

We need to have a better understanding in this area before commenting but the importance of the Secretary's role needs better recognition.

3. Alternative options

- Should the scope and function of RAWPs be expanded e.g. include all minerals? If so, how and what would be the benefit?

NO. Aggregates require the full attention of the Regional **Aggregate** Working Parties. The model however is good and can be commended; and it may well be very appropriate to run parallel systems for other minerals.

- Should the scope and function of the RAWPs be reduced, e.g. is time spent on an area that is considered irrelevant or unrelated to the function of the RAWPs? If so, which areas?

NO changes are required as to the scope and future of RAWPs.

- Should membership be expanded/ reduced and, if so, what would be the benefits?

The balance of RAWP membership is correct in both number and scope as it is a working group for the relevant technicians and professionals rather than a stakeholder gathering.

4. Funding

- Who should the Secretaries be funded by, and why?

As currently as this has proven both effective and impartial.

- Seeking funding from alternative sources (e.g. RPBs and MPAs) is an option to ensure the future of the RAWPs in their present function. In your opinion, could this be an appropriate solution? If not, why?

Impartiality is the key. All alternatives would inevitably be from the public purse anyway.

- In your opinion, if CLG were to cut funding given the current pressures on public finances, who should finance the RAWP activities?

CLG should consider the very small costs of the managed supply system and RAWPs against the alternative very much higher costs that would be incurred from the public purse from appeals and judicial reviews if the system was to be abandoned.

Future RAWP contract

Prior to any consultation, the initial options for the contract are:

- a) Do nothing and not renew the contract
- b) Renew the contract for 1 year
- c) Renew the contract for 4 years

Please indicate which of these options you think should be taken forward and explain why:

Four years to bring some continued certainty and underline the importance of ensuring an adequate and continuous supply of raw materials for the nations needs. This is even more important in the current recessionary climate and of which several years of difficult market conditions are seen.

- Please provide any further comments regarding RAWPs here:

We would again emphasise and re-state the fundamental and essential (but evolving) benefits that the RAWP structure has given at minimal cost.