



UNITED KINGDOM

Sellafield not “achieving value for money,” government watchdog says

Despite progress made over the past years, the United Kingdom’s Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has not seen an adequate return on investment in cleaning up the Sellafield nuclear site on England’s Cumbria coast, according to a new report by the U.K.’s National Audit Office, which scrutinizes government spending.

The NAO report found that the cleanup of Sellafield, which includes legacy contaminated buildings, untreated waste from nuclear fuel reprocessing, and aging facilities, is taking longer than planned and at a higher cost. Full decommissioning of the site is expected to take until 2125 to be completed at a cost of £136 billion (about \$176 billion), according to the report, which also noted that £2.7 billion (\$3.5 billion) was spent on the site in the past year.

The NAO found that since 2018, when it previously reported on Sellafield, the NDA has continued to address “significant procurement, contractual, and delivery problems.” According to the NAO, much of that progress was a result of a 2016 reorganization, when management of the site shifted from private contractor Nuclear Management Partners to Sellafield Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of the NDA. The direct ownership model has resulted in savings of around £170 million (about \$221 million) a year, the NAO reported.

Sellafield’s leadership team, however, needs to do more to improve accountability for organizational performance, according to the NAO, which noted that there have been “a

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