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Environment Agency Report to Berkeley Site Stakeholder Group

April - June 2011
For SSG Meeting Wednesday 27 July 2011

Radioactive substances

We regulate radioactive waste disposals to the environment. We do this through permits that contain limits and conditions aimed at minimising wastes and protecting the environment. We check compliance with the authorisation by making regular inspections at Berkeley.

Site Inspection

We continue to make inspection visits to the Berkeley Site. Since the last SSG meeting we have carried out two inspections of the Berkeley Site and looked at:

- Arrangements for ensuring best available techniques (BAT) are applied to gaseous radioactive waste discharges to minimise wastes generated and their environmental impact. This includes the arrangements for abating, recording and reporting of discharges
- Arrangements for the management of low level activity solid radioactive wastes (LLW) to ensure best available techniques (BAT) are applied to minimise the generation of secondary wastes and discharges of radioactive wastes including the arrangements for recording and reporting of disposals of solid LLW
- Arrangements for the management of exempt solid radioactive wastes to ensure best available techniques (BAT) are applied to minimise the generation of radioactive wastes including LLW and secondary wastes
- In addition to our own inspection activities, we routinely review the operator's reports of events and incidents occurring on its site.

We prepare Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCARs) detailing our inspections and any non-compliances identified. These are placed on the public register. During these

inspections no non-compliances were identified.

Permit Variations

The environmental permit in force for the site was issued to Magnox Limited in January 2011, under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010, (EPR2010), following its transfer from Magnox South Limited. Since January, we have not received any requests from Magnox Ltd. for changes to be made to the conditions and limitations in the environmental permit.

Discharge Reports

Nuclear sites are required to routinely report to us their liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment and transfers of radioactive wastes to other sites. We review this information and place these reports on the public register. This information is available in summary form on the Environment Agency Website facility 'What's in your backyard?'¹.

Environmental Impacts

The site's authorisation contains a specification to carry out an environmental monitoring programme, to monitor and assess the impact of their discharges on the environment. The monitoring data from this programme indicates the radiological impact on the environment is low.

In addition, along with the Food Standards Agency we conduct an independent environmental monitoring programme. Due to their proximity the Berkeley and Oldbury sites have a combined programme. The results of this programme are published in an annual report, "Radioactivity in Food and the Environment" (RIFE). The RIFE report (RIFE-15) covering the calendar year 2009 was published in October 2010. It is available to download from our website².

¹ http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/wiybyController?ep=mapto pics&lang=_e

² <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/110353.aspx>

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It reports that the impact from Berkeley, during 2009, was 0.025 milli-sieverts received as an external dose for members of the public who have high occupancy rates in intertidal areas. The total dose to the most exposed members of the public, taking account of direct radiation from the site, was attributed to be 0.058 milli-Sieverts (or less than 6% of the dose limit).

The next RIFE report (RIFE-16) covering the calendar year 2010 is due to be published in October 2011.

ILW Management

As part of plans to prepare for Care and Maintenance of the site, the site are developing plans for the management of their intermediate level radioactive waste (ILW).

The site needs to finalise its decision on what constitutes the best practicable environmental option (BPEO) for the management of these ILW wastes.

The site is currently conducting trials on the retrieval of ILW from its vaults and waste management arrangements to underpin its decision.

Enforcement

Since our last report we have not taken any enforcement action and do not have any actions pending against Magnox Limited for their operation of the Berkeley Site.

Further Information

Further information on our role in regulating the use of radioactive substances and related activities on nuclear licensed sites can be found on our website³.

³ <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/epages/eapublications.storefront> Search for keyword 'RSR'

Karl Littlewood is Lead Regulator for Berkeley Site. Karl's contact details are:
Address: Environment Agency, Red Kite House, Howbery Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8BD
Telephone: 01491 828378.
e-mail: karl.littlewood@environment-agency.gov.uk

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