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Environment Agency Report to Berkeley Site Stakeholder Group

July- October 2011

For SSG Meeting Wednesday 2 November 2011

This report covers our regulation of Berkeley Nuclear Licensed site and related issues.

Radioactive substances

We regulate radioactive waste disposals to the environment. We do this through environmental 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 the management of Intermediate Level radioactive waste (ILW) to minimise wastes generated, discharges and disposals and their environmental impact. This includes the arrangements for abating, recording and reporting of discharges
- Management arrangements to ensure compliance with the environmental permit including maintenance of environmentally critical equipment and plant, detailed in the Environmental Maintenance Schedule (EMS)
- 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, 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 these for compliance and this is detailed in a RASCAR. These reports are then placed on the public register.

In May, we reviewed the discharge returns provided by the site, for the period covering January to March 2011 and identified a reporting error. We have recorded this as a non-compliance. We provided advice to the site and they took action to correct the erroneous reporting. No further non-compliances have been identified for the subsequent reporting period, covering April through to July 2011.

We recorded the reporting error, using our Compliance Categorisation Scheme (CCS), as a Category 4 – the lowest level of breach – reflecting that it did not have any associated environmental impact. No further enforcement action was taken against the site.

The information in the discharge reports 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

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

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.

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

The RIFE 15 report, identifies 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).

Annual Review

During October, we attended the Berkeley site annual review of environmental, safety and security performance. This provides the opportunity for the site to review performance over the previous twelve months with regulators and highlight forthcoming work identified for the next year.

ILW Management

As part of plans to prepare for Care and Maintenance of the site, the site continue to develop their 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.

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

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

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