

Environment Agency Nuclear Regulation Report to Dungeness Site Stakeholder Group on Dungeness B Power Station



October to December 2011

Nuclear Regulation

The Environment Agency's lead nuclear regulator for Dungeness B during this period was Paul Naylor. Joanna Moakes takes over this role from January 2012. They work in the national Nuclear Regulation Group (South) and liaise with colleagues based in Kent in regulating the Dungeness B site.

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Attendance at site

We made visits on 12, 13 October, 16, 17 November, 21, 22 December. Regular contact is maintained with the site by telephone and e-mail in addition to formal correspondence.

The Environment Agency receives monthly reports from Dungeness B on its radioactive discharges, and these are placed on the public register along with reports of compliance assessment undertaken on site visits.

Current regulatory issues

Routine discharges and disposals – All radioactive discharges and disposals from Dungeness B remain within the limits set by our Environmental Permit.

Discharge reporting error – An erroneously large discharge of particulate cobalt-60 to atmosphere was reported by the station during this period. Both the actual and reported discharges were within limits but we were disappointed that this error had not been picked up by the improved discharge reporting and tracking

processes. These have now been amended further.

Plant and equipment improvements – We note that significant improvements continue to be made. These include further important repairs to surface water drains in 2011, the ongoing project to replace the equipment for monitoring the station's radioactive gaseous discharges and the work recently started to replace the final radioactive aqueous waste discharge lines that run from the Active Effluent Water Treatment Plant to the cooling water outflow.

Drainage connection to foul sewer – In November, the station operators reported they had discovered that a relief drainage route from a sink, where potentially active equipment is washed, was inadvertently connected to a foul sewer. On discovery of this connection, it was immediately isolated by the operator. The station considers it unlikely that there was any significant radioactive discharge via this route, which goes to the sewage treatment plant at Dungeness A. The Station's investigation is ongoing, and we await its findings before deciding on our response.

Reactor gas discharges from minor discharge outlets – A recent plant fault led to carbon dioxide leakage from one of the gas circulators. Station operators demonstrated that the resulting radioactive discharges were within the much lower limit (2% of site limit) that applies to such minor discharge outlets.

Site Environmental Review – This annual meeting was held on

22 December, attended by Nuclear Regulation Group and local Area Environment Agency staff, and the station's management team. We noted the significant improvements in station environmental performance in recent years, and the continued effort that will be needed to maintain it.

17 January 2012