

Environment Agency Report to the Dungeness Site Stakeholder Group - 26th January 2012

Covering Environmental regulation of Dungeness A nuclear licensed site: October 2011 - December 2011

This report covers our regulation of Dungeness-A nuclear licensed site and related issues.

Dungeness-A

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 permit by making regular inspections of Dungeness-A. Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment (RASCAR) Reports detailing our inspections and non-compliances found are periodically placed on the Public register.

Over the reporting period our inspections have focussed on:-

- Routine site event reporting
- Solid Low Level Waste management and arrangements including clearance of exempt waste.
- Management and arrangements of the Active effluent treatment facility
- Management and arrangements of the foul effluent treatment and disposal system
- Intermediate level waste processing and secondary waste arisings, including progress of the sludge processing preparatory works.
- A review of training and induction arrangements for staff responsible for the management of solid radioactive waste. This included the training programme for the site's nominated Qualified Experts (QE) and Approved Suitably Qualified and Experienced Persons (ASQEPS).

We have also held and continued our discussions with the site concerning,

- Progress on de-fuelling the two reactors
- Progress on waste sludge disposal plans, including construction of the new sludge processing and encapsulation facility.
- Progress on the site waste characterisation project.
- Progress on the proposals (subject to regulator approval) for Magnox to transfer a limited volume of Fuel Element Debris (FED) waste to Dungeness for processing.

- We are keen to see operators make best use of waste processing facilities to minimise the overall impact of radioactive waste processing and disposal subject to due process and BAT assessment.
- In October 2011, Magnox produced the Magnox Integrated Waste Strategy (IWS) summarising the key waste management issues and opportunities for the ten nuclear licensed sites operated by Magnox Ltd. There is a main report with appendices for each of the 10 sites, Appendix C being that for Dungeness A. These are available on the Magnox website. We are currently reviewing all of these documents.

Discharge reports

Both Dungeness sites are required to report liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment and transfers of radioactive wastes to other sites on a regular basis. These reports are placed on the public register and a digest of information is available via the Environment Agency website- 'What's in your backyard?' facility[i].

Liquid and gaseous discharges from Dungeness-A are at low levels and well within the requirements of its authorised limits. No Quarterly Notification Levels (QNL's) have been exceeded in the period.

Environmental impact

In both sites' authorisations we specify a rigorous environmental monitoring programme, that requires them to monitor and assess the impact of their discharges on the environment. Their impact on the environment is low [ii].

The Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report for 2010 was published electronically in October 2011. This annual report is available from the websites of the reporting organisations - Environment Agency, Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, and Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Hard copies are also available by request.

Doses to the public from the operations of both nuclear sites at Dungeness were consistent with those from previous years and the variability expected in the estimates made. The assessed dose from all sources was estimated to be around 0.022mSv or 2% of the public dose limit (1mSv) to those living close to the site. As in recent years, this is almost entirely due to direct radiation from the site. Following 2006, this dose has significantly declined.

Emergency Preparedness

As part of its compliance with the Nuclear Site Licence conditions and the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations 1999, every three years Dungeness A is required to test its ability to respond to an off-site emergency invoking the local authority multi agency response plan. In May 2011, Dungeness A met its legal obligations under REPPIR.

Incidents and enforcement

Since our last report we have served no enforcement actions and we have no other outstanding actions against Magnox for their operation of Dungeness-A.

Periodic Permit Review

As part of our routine activities we annually review the adequacy of the existing permit for the current and planned operations on the site. We undertook the annual review in December 2011.

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 website [iii].

Regulator Changes

This is my last SSG as Environment Agency Regulator for Dungeness A site. I would like to thank all members of the SSG for their interest and interactions over the last four and a half years. In April 2011, my colleague Robert Price will be taking over. Neither I or Robert are able to join you for the SSG meeting on this occasion and send our apologies. He looks forward to meeting you at subsequent meetings as site Regulator for Dungeness A and can be contacted via the Agency's offices as below.

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References

[i] http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/wiybyController?ep=maptopics&lang=_e

[ii] Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) 2010,

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