

## Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group

### **FIFTH HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2006 IN THE LAURISTON HOTEL, ARDROSSAN**

#### **Present**

##### **North Ayrshire Council**

Councillor Richard Wilkinson (Chair)

##### **British Energy**

Mr Brian Cowell

Ms Melanie Robson (B Station Secretariat)

Mr Graham Perry (B Station Specialist)

##### **Community Councillors**

Mr Kenneth MacDougall - Ardrossan

Mrs Rita Holmes - Fairlie

Mr John Robertson - Largs

##### **British Nuclear Group**

Mr Peter Roach

Mrs Lynne McTaggart (A Site Specialist)

Mrs Alyson Russell-Stevenson (SSG Secretariat)

Mr Tony Bale

##### **Hunterston Estates**

Mr Angus Cochran-Patrick

##### **National Farmers Union**

Mrs Eleanor Lamont (Deputy Chair)

##### **Nuclear Decommissioning Authority**

Mr Randall Bargelt

##### **NII**

Mr David Shepherd (B Station Inspector)

##### **SEPA**

Mr Karl Littlewood (A Station Inspector)

Mr Keith Hammond (B Station Inspector)

Several members of the public were also in attendance

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor D Munn, Councillor J Moffat, Mr Hugh McGhee, Mr Kevin Thomas, North Ayrshire Council. Dr W Munro, Foods Standards Agency (FSA). Mr H Kerr, Strathclyde Fire Brigade, Mr Peter Ford, NII, Dr J Cooper, Mrs L Dunlop, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Mr John Lamb, West Kilbride Community Council, Strathclyde Police and fire brigade representatives.

**1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

Mrs Lamont thanked the members and public for their attendance at this fifth meeting of the Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group. She said that she hoped that everyone would enjoy and participate in the meeting, which would be scheduled to close at around 12.30pm. Mrs Lamont then asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

She continued that Councillor Wilkinson hoped to join the meeting later but she would chair until his arrival.

**2. MINUTES of the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2006**

The minutes of the meeting of the SSG meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2006 were discussed, minor amendments made and the minutes agreed.

Mr MacDougall raised the issue of payment for the Chair and Deputy Chair and SSG members. Mrs Lamont opened the discussion up to the members of the group to take their view forward. Mrs Lamont stated that Councillor Wilkinson had been approached by the site some time back to discuss payment of the Chair and that she was aware that he did not wish to be paid for attending meetings and had declined the offer. Mrs Lamont responded that she, as Deputy Chair would be formally applying for payment for attendance. Mr MacDougall responded that as a member of the SSG and representing the community, a lot of time is spent away from home and at times up to half a month can be taken up with SSG issues, and he feels that members should also be paid for attendance. Mr Bargelt answered that if a request came to the NDA through the Chair of the SSG they would look in to the matter on a case by case basis.

Mrs Holmes pointed out that even though she was missing out on a days wage to attend SSG meetings she did not want to be paid to attend and thought that the members should be there because of their interest and not because of a payment incentive.

Mr Griffin from the NDA was in the audience and Mrs Lamont invited him to comment as she was aware this was his area of expertise. Mr Griffin stated that it was down to the SSG members to have this discussion and it was for them to decide and put their formal proposal of payment for members to the NDA. Mr Griffin stated that he would recommend the need for evidence that the group has discussed this matter and worked out the figures they felt entitled to.

Mrs Lamont stated that there would be a subgroup meeting sometime in July and this issue should be discussed by the members in attendance at that that meeting. She said that only then could the outcome be put in writing via the Chair to the NDA.

Mr MacDougall then stated that at the March meeting he asked about the issue of the graphite sleeves for the ILW Store and stated that he believed them to be high level waste and this was not in the minutes. Mr Roach answered that, as he stated at the last meeting, there is no high

level waste on the Hunterston A site and that the graphite sleeves were intermediate level waste.

### 3. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs Lamont said that two pieces of correspondence had been received since the last SSG meeting in March.

She explained that they were both from members of the public who wished to consider for membership of the SSG. She then referred back to when the SSG was being set up and that at the time the members suggested that once it was better established they would try and recruit additional members possibly school pupils, board members or local business representatives. Mrs Lamont suggested that was perhaps the time to invite people to join and go through a selection process. Mrs Holmes said that she felt they would have to be careful who they allow to become members of the SSG. Mrs Lamont said that due to the growing number of requests the SSG were receiving for new members maybe it would be a fairer and more open process to advertise for members. Mr MacDougall stated that he thought that the meetings are more represented by industry than by community and the balance needed to be right.

Mrs Lamont said that she would like to hold this matter for discussion at an SSG Subgroup meeting. Mrs Lamont explained that these meetings were useful for this type of discussion and the last subgroup meeting was held to discuss Site End State and Socio-economic matters.

A member from the audience stated that he thought subgroups were not fair coverage of the SSG as no members of the public were in attendance. Mrs Lamont stated that the SSG Subgroup is a working group of the voting members of the SSG, and any issues arising from the subgroup meetings would be brought to the table at SSG meetings.

Mrs Lamont asked if there were any further questions, as there were none Mrs Lamont handed over to Mr Peter Roach, Site Manager, Hunterston A Site British Nuclear Group.

### 4. **HUNTERSTON A SITE REPORT, BRITISH NUCLEAR GROUP**

#### • **Hunterston A Site Manager's Report**

Mr Roach explained that Hunterston A had now achieved 58 months without a lost time accident. He stated that 2005/06 had been an exceptionally good year; the site had been well managed and controlled, engaging openly with the many stakeholders allowing them to influence and shape the plans for Hunterston A. Mr Roach stated that the Hunterston A team remained fully committed to safety and he stressed to the staff to not become complacent; he continued that the site were about to roll out a new safety and environmental enhancement plan to strive for continuous improvement. He added that Hunterston have had another incident free period, and that this performance was all the more significant given the amount of nuclear decommissioning currently underway.

Mr Roach explained that in addition to regular inspections by the regulators, Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS), British Nuclear Group arranges other independent audits to compliment Hunterston A's own self-validation processes. There were no significant issues identified and that there were some observations made to further enhance procedures in some areas, thus profiting from learning elsewhere.

Mr Roach discussed the Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) Store explaining civil construction of the store was now complete. He continued that the NDA Chairman Sir Anthony Cleaver visited the site and performed a topping off ceremony on the store. He explained that the focus was now on the installation of the plant and equipment and that by the summer the building would be clad to add that final level of protection from the elements. He finished that with much plant and equipment to install and extensive commissioning arrangements, the store was not scheduled for use until summer 2007.

Mr Roach went on to discuss the reactors. He explained that the additional de-planting work on reactor 1 reported at the last meeting was now completed as expected by the end of March. He said that this work had in fact gone so well that he had been able to persuade the NDA that similar work on reactor 2 should follow straight on using the same teams, on the grounds of safety and value for money. Work is progressing well and without incident.

Mr Roach discussed the fuel route (dry) and said it was a system of tunnels, shafts and conveyors was used to transfer the irradiated fuel from the reactors to the Cartridge Cooling Pond (CCP). He continued that good progress had been made over the previous three months with the conveyors and all wall-mounted equipment removed into containers ready for transport to Drigg as Low Level Waste (LLW). He finished that the next phase of the project would be to effect a decontamination of the surface of the fuel tunnels using Ultra High Pressure (UHP) washing to remove a few microns layer of concrete.

Mr Roach explained that the land characterisation project continued to make good progress against the LifeTime Plan (LTP) and in particular, the main events since March 2006 had been:

- Phase 1 of the foreshore erosion studies was completed, the results of which are currently under review.
- Separate contracts have been placed for the second phase of monitoring and assessment of the foreshore and the continued monitoring of the groundwater at Hunterston A.

Mr Roach went on to discuss the reactor building structure and that as reported in the March report the construction of the new weather envelope over reactors 1 and 2 had been deferred. Routine observations and remedial work when required would ensure the existing structure would remain safe. He continued that an alternative cladding approach would be considered to better fit with the new NDA Strategy. He continued that in the meantime interim arrangements would continue to install a temporary weather barrier onto the reactors and that this work was currently scheduled to start on site in June 2007.

Mr Roach closed his report by discussing the sites future plans with the members. He stated that early indications showed that there would be a further 50 new jobs, most of whom would be recruited locally including 4 new apprentices and a number of graduates in the region of 6.

He then stated that the original plan for Hunterston A showed that the site were planning to propose a feasibility study to process and store a very small amount of waste in the region of 12 cubic metres, of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) resins from Chapelcross.

Mrs Lamont thanked Mr Roach for his report and asked the members if they had any questions.

Mr MacDougall said that he was very concerned about the future plans to even consider taking waste from another site and bringing it to Hunterston. He continued that the site was not a disposal site or storage facility for the entirety of Scotland and he would not stand for this. He continued that taking waste from all over the country was not correct and where would all this stop - did Mr Roach want the West of Scotland to end up as a repository. Mr MacDougall continued that it was an affront to even write this down as an idea of a suggestion and be put for consideration. He continued that this was a Chapelcross problem not a Hunterston one.

Mr Roach replied that it was only a feasibility study and that in the idea of openness and transparency he wanted to let the stakeholders know that the study was in the pipeline. He continued that this would result in a significant amount of savings to the government and was not by any means a done deal.

Mrs Lamont asked what was to stop the site bringing in waste from all over the country once this door was open. Mr MacDougall interjected that once a door is open its impossible to close.

Mr Cochran-Patrick asked about Drigg and why the waste couldn't go there. Mr Roach explained that Drigg was for LLW not ILW waste and that the capacity at Drigg for LLW was also getting short, but that was a matter for the government.

Mrs Holmes said that in her opinion local people accept the Hunterston A store and that they are resigned to the fact that it is required. She continued that the accepting of waste from Chapelcross would be a healthy financial outcome for the nuclear industry but the community especially in Fairlie would be against taking other peoples waste. She continued that it was her understanding that Chapelcross waste has always gone to Sellafield so why the sudden change.

Mr Bargelt responded that the NDA were looking at the feasibility across the UK and not insular. He continued that everything in the nuclear industry was carried out with regulator consent and with stakeholder views taken into account. If it is not feasible it will not happen, as Mr Roach said, this is not a done deal.

Mr Bale made a comment that this was the first time he had heard of this study and that if this was the Site Manager dipping his toes in the water, he should step back as the water was boiling. Mr Roach responded that the first time people hear about something new it will inevitably be a surprise. He continued that he fully accepted there would be questions raised on

this matter but the fact remained that he wanted to brief on all matters and not just the perceived easy or nice ones. Mr Roach continued that he couldn't change history and the perception that the nuclear industry was very closed but he could ensure that this was not the intention of British Nuclear Group, his personal policy or that of the NDA.

Mrs Lamont asked if there were any further questions from the members. There were none.

Mrs Lamont then addressed the members of the public and asked if they had any questions for Mr Roach at this point. There were none.

Mrs Lamont thanked Mr Roach for his report and asked Ms McTaggart to present the Radiological and Environmental Safety report for Hunterston A.

• **Radiological and Environmental Safety Report - Hunterston A**

Ms McTaggart presented this report and explained it covered radiological safety and environmental performance at Hunterston 'A' Decommissioning Site from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006 until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006. She highlighted that liquid radioactive effluent discharges remained low and well within authorised limits which were running at approximately 10% of the 12 month rolling authorisation total for Total Beta. The main source of liquid effluent discharges were from routine activities (via the drains servicing contamination controlled areas) and backwashing of sand filters for cleaning the pond water.

Ms McTaggart went on to discuss that solid Low Level Waste (LLW) disposals to Drigg were within authorised limits running at approximately 70% of the 12 month rolling authorisation total on a volume basis. She continued that the main sources of solid LLW was the encapsulated sludges that were generated from retrieval of the wastes in the Miscellaneous Sludge Retention Tanks, and non-compactable waste generated during pilecap deplanting and fuel route de-planting activities.

Ms McTaggart reported that approximately 51 tonnes of scrap metal and cable was disposed of from site for re-cycling during the period January – March 2006. She went on to explain that approximately 256 cubic yards of general rubble have been disposed of to landfill from site during the period January – April 2006.

Ms McTaggart closed her report by stating that there were no significant radiological events in the period from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006 and that during a routine Health Physics monitoring survey of the 15" and 18" outfalls, elevated Tritium levels were identified in water samples. She continued that this was an unusual result and therefore the site had identified a programme of work to identify the source of the Tritium. She stated that this would include more frequent monitoring of the 15" and 18" outfall areas and the associated field drain network. She finished by reporting subsequent sampling carried out in the area had demonstrated that the levels of tritium present in the effluent was now below background levels and that the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) had been informed.

Mrs Lamont thanked Ms McTaggart and asked if the members or members of the public had any questions.

As there were no questions, Mrs Lamont thanked Ms McTaggart for her report.

- **HSE NII Hunterston A Site Inspector's Report**

Mr Ford was unable to attend the meeting and sent his apologies.

Mrs Lamont asked the SSG members if they had any questions for the Inspector that she could pass on to the Inspector. There were none.

- **SEPA Hunterston A Site Inspectors Report**

Mr Littlewood gave a verbal report.

He explained that there had been one SEPA site inspection since the last meeting which focused on the site gaseous discharge systems and that this had a satisfactory outcome.

Mr Littlewood said that he was looking forward to continuing working with the operator with regard to the new authorisation limits for which SEPA were hoping to receive the application before the end of the financial year.

Mrs Lamont asked if there were any questions for Mr Littlewood from the members of the SSG or public. There were none.

- **Any other A Site Business**

Mrs Lamont asked Mr Roach if there was any other business to close the A Site part of the agenda. Mr Roach said he had no matters to discuss.

Mrs Lamont asked if there were any questions for Mr Roach from the members of the SSG or public. There were none.

This concluded the Hunterston A section of the agenda.

Councillor Wilkinson joined the meeting at this time.

## 5. MINUTES OF REPORT OF HUNTERSTON B STATION, BRITISH ENERGY

### • **Safety & Environmental Performance**

Mr Cowell started the summary of the British Energy Hunterston B report by noting that this was the best performance over a 3 year period in the station's history for industrial safety, nuclear safety and environmental performance.

He went on to note RoSPA's commendation in the electricity industry sector award and highlighted that Hunterston B was the first British Energy station to receive this prestigious award.

### • **Media Interest**

Mr Cowell reported on the greatly increased attention from local, regional and national media since the Prime Minister's positive comments about nuclear's role in a future UK energy policy in April. He mentioned the BBC UK-wide screening of a film shot at Hunterston B in early May for the BBC 1 Politics Show including an interview with senior shop steward for Amicus, Stuart McGhee.

### • **Environment**

Mr Cowell emphasised that he was yet again reporting the best ever environmental performance for Hunterston B in terms of reportable environmental events. Notwithstanding this, he explained that over the period the number of near misses and anomalies reported had at first increased the awareness of environmental issues improved and has now started to fall. He continued that this was a good sign as it means small matters are now being dealt with before they become problems. He said that reporting near misses enables everyone to capture the learning from the issue.

### • **HEPA Filter Efficiency Tests**

Responding to an action from the previous SSG meeting in March, Mr Cowell referred to a written briefing on HEPA filter test results which had been requested by Mrs Holmes. Additional copies of the results are available from Mr Cowell's PA Melanie Robson on [melanie.robson@british-energy.com](mailto:melanie.robson@british-energy.com) if required.

### • **Output**

Mr Cowell noted that output for 2005/6 at 7.91 TWh was slightly behind plan. He added that output so far in the current financial year is also slightly behind plan due mainly to repairs required on a boiler tube leak and boiler control rods. Mr Cowell emphasised that while it was disappointing to be behind plan the problems were in a non-nuclear part of the plant and that the company was making the investment in the repairs now to rectify problems in the long term.

### • **Emergency Preparedness**

Mr Cowell said that Hunterston B had demonstrated its emergency preparedness to the NII in March. The station had agreed to re-demonstrate a particular aspect of the arrangements – the command and control procedures in the new Access Control Point. A further demonstration would take place on Friday 16 June 2006.

- **Relaunch of the Talk Service**

Mr Cowell announced that British Energy's Talk Service had been relaunched to help raise awareness of what nuclear power means to its communities. He invited SSG members and the public audience to contact British Energy's press officer for Scotland, Sue Fletcher, on [sue.fletcher@british-energy.com](mailto:sue.fletcher@british-energy.com) if a Hunterston B speaker would be welcome at any forthcoming events.

- **Employee Charity of the Year**

Mr Cowell announced that last year's charity of the year fund raising made more than £350,000 for The Prince's Trust. He said that hopes were high that a similar amount would be raised for the new charity chosen by employees, Help the Hospices. He explained that Hunterston B staff would be working to raise money for the Ayrshire Hospice and that many staff would be getting involved in volunteering opportunities as well.

- **Statutory Outage**

Mr Cowell concluded his summary by reminding members that the station's statutory outage (planned maintenance shutdown) would begin in July on unit 3. He emphasised that the primary focus would be safety, as always, and that Hunterston B was aspiring to meet Hunterston A station's sustained high standards of safety performance. He explained that the local communities would see an influx of many hundreds of people in the form of contractors working temporarily at Hunterston B for the duration of the outage.

- **Radiological Safety**

Mr Cowell handed over to Mr Perry for this section of the report.

- **Radiation Doses**

Here is a brief explanation of the units used in this report:

The maximum permissible dose to a radiation worker in the UK is 20 mSv (milliSieverts) in a calendar year. The average annual radiation dose to the UK population from all sources is 2.6 mSv. Collective dose is usually measured in man.milliSieverts. For example, if ten people were each to receive 0.1 milliSieverts each during a particular task, the collective dose for the task would be 10 people X 0.1 mSv each = 1 man.milliSievert.

Mr Perry said doses to the end of May 2006 were 14.96 man mSv collective dose to station staff and that Contractors had received collective dose of 4.35 man mSv. This was in line with expectations and at low levels as would be expected during a period where no high dose work had been undertaken.

He said the challenge for the station was to minimise dose levels during the outage considering the work planned and the fact that 2 or 3 times the normal number of persons would be on site.

- **Radioactive Discharges**

Mr Perry said that one ISO container of Low level Waste (LLW) had been filled and sent to Drigg.

He said that gaseous discharges of Carbon 14 levels were 63% of the authorized limit and that Tritium levels in liquid discharges were 53% of the authorised limit over the last 12 months.

- **Sunday Herald Article about Carbon 14 Discharges**

Mr Perry referred to an article in the Sunday Herald on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2006 that had reported an unfavourable response from the Food Standards Agency in respect of British Energy's request to SEPA to raise the authorised limit of Carbon 14 discharges from Hunterston B in the future. The article stated the 'Children who eat locally produced food could receive radiation doses above the recommended limit'.

Mr Perry explained that the data used by the FSA in making their judgement was obtained from a report commissioned by SEPA from the then NRPB (now Health Protection Agency) in 2004. In such a study assumptions have to be made about the habits and sources of food when deriving likely doses to the public from radioactive discharges and that very pessimistic assumptions had been made by NRPB in their report. Better data was now available.

He said that British Energy calculations made using real data about the local population show that doses received by the public are substantially lower than the limits and constraints set for the industry and that actual environmental measurements support this.

Mr Perry said that when the Food Standards Agency has had the opportunity to review all the data supplied by BE to SEPA, including additional data supplied by BE earlier this year, that FSA and SEPA will form their own completely independent view about the merits of the BE discharge application. British Energy is however confident that the FSA concerns as reported by the Sunday Herald will be completely allayed.

Mr Perry confirmed that most of the documents referred to above have been placed into the public domain by SEPA.

- **Historical Contamination at Fairlie Railhead**

Responding to an action from the previous meeting, stemming from a question from Mrs Holmes, Mr Perry gave a briefing on historical contamination from Magnox fuel flasks at the Fairlie Railhead. The content of this briefing is attached as an appendix to the minutes.

Mr Perry stressed it had been a legal or regulatory issue rather than a health risk and explained that the actual contamination levels were too low to be considered a radiological risk.

Mrs Holmes said she had been one of the people who had made an issue of this contamination at the time. Mrs Holmes thanked Mr Perry for his briefing. Mr Cowell added that while this briefing had been useful to remind us all of the problems we had had in the past, it was not an issue today.

Mr MacDougall asked further questions about the leaching from the Magnox flasks, how long had it been going on for, and was there contamination along the rail line. Mr Perry said that while the contamination issue had occurred between 1966 until 1996 it first became a cause of regulatory concern in the late 1980's.

In response to a question by Mr MacDougall Mr Perry said that the railway lines to Sellafield had not been monitored but that railway yards across the network had been checked and no contamination had been found. He again emphasised that the levels of radiation involved were barely negligible and did not represent a health risk.

- **Waste Oil Incineration**

Mrs Holmes asked why higher authorisations had been requested from SEPA for incineration of slightly radioactive waste oil. Mr Perry explained that the limits requested were actually generally lower than previously authorised and that Hunterston B was required to reapply for a collective authorisation for all discharges from SEPA instead of individual authorisations such as oil.

Mrs Holmes asked which isotopes were in airborne emissions and Mr Perry explained it was mostly tritium, carbon 14, cobalt-60 and trace amounts of Americium-241.

Mrs Lamont asked where the radioactivity from the burning oil goes. Mr Perry explained that it was assumed it all went up the stack and discharged to air – the planned discharge route – although in reality some of the radioactivity was captured in the ash and disposed of as solid LLW.

Mrs Lamont asked Keith Hammond, SEPA's site inspector for Hunterston B, whether SEPA had any issues with burning of waste oil at Hunterston B.

Mr Hammond explained that there were no problems with current arrangements and also reminded the group of the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations which apply to conventional discharges not radioactivity.

Mrs Holmes asked if it was not too risky to burn waste oil. Mr Cowell responded that, following assessment and consideration of the risks of storing oil or transporting off site, incineration was the best and safest option. He said it was considered to be the method that would give the least impact.

Mrs Lamont asked what volume of waste oil was burned each year and Mr Perry said it was a few thousand litres each year.

Mrs Holmes asked if it would be better to store it rather than burn it but Mr Perry explained that it would become an increasing fire risk if stored.

Mr MacDougall asked if the authorisation to burn waste oil was only required should there be a life extension of Hunterston B and Mr Perry explained that it was necessary for current operations.

Mrs Lamont asked Mr Hammond if SEPA considered this to be the best option. Mr Hammond said that there were a range of options including recycling it, storing it or reprocessing it. He said it was not for SEPA to recommend the best method - SEPA's job is to judge British Energy's submission against the legislation.

Mr MacDougall expressed a concern that what goes up must come down and that years of incineration must have allowed emissions to accumulate and would this not eventually come down and increase contamination? Mr Perry agreed that what goes up does indeed come down and that in principle contamination levels could be expected to increase with time but that levels are such that they are generally indistinguishable from natural background radioactivity and of no consequence. Mr Cowell added that the levels are so low that they are undetectable in the environment.

Mr Bale asked if any significant increases had been seen by the workforce or by monitoring staff. Mr Cowell said there had not.

A member of the public audience, Mr Young, Hunterston A station's former station chemist, added that in his 30 plus years of experience radioactive emissions from oil burning just can't be found because they are so low. He asked Mr Perry if there is any particulate filtration in the stack and Mr Perry said there was not.

Mrs Holmes asked if the risk is higher for people living in the Hunterston area than for those living 10 miles away. Mr Perry said the risk to individuals in the area is negligible. Mrs Holmes challenged that this assertion was based on statistics, not people. Mr Perry responded that the levels of radioactivity in the environment are so low you can't easily measure them.

Mrs Holmes asked how the oil is stored and Mr Cowell explained it is in safe tanks, which are banded and protected.

• **Contamination Incident**

Mr MacDougall referred to the instance of personal contamination mentioned by Mr Perry in his earlier report and asked how far outside the radiological controlled area was it identified. Mr Perry explained it has been around the charge hall crane that was within the Radiological Controlled Area and had been easily removed by washing.

Mr Wilkinson said that it would be useful for the SSG to have reports on emissions from the oil incinerator stack at Hunterston B, together with SEPA's input on legal and regulatory restrictions.

**ACTION – MR PERRY & MR HAMMOND**

- **Talk Service**

Mrs Holmes asked why British Energy was reintroducing the Talk Service. Mr Cowell explained it had been a difficult four years for British Energy with its financial restructuring and that they were now coming confidently out of the restructuring phase and were ready to be more proactive in raising local awareness of the nuclear operations at Hunterston and the industry generally. Mr Wilkinson asked if any advertising would be taking place for the Talk Service. Mrs Fletcher (British Energy's press officer for Scotland) explained that it would not be specifically advertised but would rely on local networks and direct contact with target community groups such as schools, round tables, community councils etc.

Mrs Holmes asked if it would be like the previous workshop when it was held in the day time as she couldn't attend. Mr Cowell replied that the workshop was very well attended and that Hunterston B staff would be delighted to deliver talks at the times requested by groups.

- **Request for Noise-free Days**

Mr Cochran-Patrick said that noise pollution was an issue for the Hunterston estate and requested that they be able to request no noise on particular days, such as the forthcoming gala day. Mr Cowell agreed to this request.

- **Monitoring**

Mrs Holmes requested a baseline survey of the beach and inland areas with repeat surveys in the future to assess the effect of waste oil incineration etc. Mr Perry pointed out that this has been done since the Hunterston A station started operating.

Mrs Holmes said that this was just statistics and was not based on people who eat shellfish from the area etc. Mr Cowell pointed out that foodstuffs around the entire area are being monitored.

Mrs Lamont requested a map indicating the monitoring points. **ACTION – MR PERRY**

Mrs Holmes challenged this and said it was not sufficient for a decommissioning site where increased emission could be expected.

Mr Cowell suggested at the next meeting British Energy produces a map as requested plus information on the 40 years of monitoring, and have a discussion based on facts, not speculation. **ACTION – MR COWELL & MR PERRY**

Mr Littlewood added that SEPA does its own independent monitoring to check levels, to corroborate the operator's data and to fulfil government reporting requirements. He said that the SEPA monitoring results were available free of charge on request. Mr Perry commended the Radioactivity In Food & Environment (RIFE) report, which is available on the SEPA web site and includes all the relevant data.

Mr Littlewood added that SEPA also has a contract in place for an independent survey of nuclear licensed sites, looking at significant routes where people might get a radiological dose. He said this independent study further adds to SEPA's recommendations.

Mrs Lamont pointed out that it is clear a baseline survey already exists but that Mrs Holmes did not accept it. Mrs Holmes said she believes there is not an adequately detailed baseline survey.

Mrs Lamont asked for a hard copy of the results to be sent out. Mr Bale asked that SEPA's independent study results are included alongside this. **ACTION MS ROBSON**

- **SEPA Report**

Mr Hammond delivered the verbal SEPA report for Hunterston B. He explained that over the last year British Energy had changed the nuclear licensee's name so reauthorisation had to take place with the new company name.

He explained that while SEPA's public consultation on authorisation limits had closed officially on 2 June there was still an opportunity to write in to SEPA before August and submissions would be taken into account.

Mr Hammond explained that new controlled activity regulations had come into force on 1 April and that the site would need to be licensed further.

Mr Hammond concluded by saying that he had started regular meetings with the site to discuss environmental performance and this had been very useful for all concerned and would continue.

- **NII Report**

The new NII site inspector for Hunterston B is Mr Dave Shepherd, formerly at Hartlepool, who introduced himself to the SSG. He explained that the quarterly report had not been produced by him but that he would be happy to take any questions and come back with responses where necessary.

Mr Shepherd noted the intent to repeat the demonstration of the command and control procedures in the new Access Control Point on Friday.

Mr Shepherd referred to an earlier comment about 'mods' and offered an explanation for this term. He said an example is the cast iron pipework at Hunterston B, most of which will be replaced during the coming outage because of its corrosion as a result of seawater. He said that this modification is of interest to the NII and that they would be letting the station know that they would be seeking an overarching category 1 modification for these changes, although Mr Cowell would not yet be aware of that.

Mr Shepherd added that during the outage the NII would be observing and challenging the work. He explained that British Energy comes to the NII for consent to restart and that the NII has to be satisfied they can approve the safety case for the next three years.

Mrs Holmes asked if they would be looking specifically at graphite brick cracking during the outage. Mr Shepherd responded that they would be getting a baseline position based on the outcome of the inspections during the outage.

This concluded the Hunterston B section of the agenda.

**6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006 in Millport. This was agreed to be an afternoon meeting with a start time of 1300 with a buffet lunch to be arranged for 1200. The venue would be notified once availability had been confirmed.

**7. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Mrs Lamont addressed the members of the public on behalf of the SSG and asked if there were any further questions on any of the reports or any questions to any member of the SSG, which they would like to ask. There were none. Mrs Lamont then thanked the public for their support and the members of the group for a lively discussion during the meeting and closed the meeting.

**Councillor Richard Wilkinson**  
**SSG Chair**

## APPENDIX FOR HUNTERSTON B STATION REPORT

### Fairlie Railhead February 1996 – Summary of Events

- **Narrative**

Between 1964 when Hunterston ‘A’ was commissioned and 1996 when the work at Fairlie Railhead was carried out approximately 900 flasks originating from Hunterston ‘A’ and 900 flasks originating from Hunterston ‘B’ were dispatched to Sellafield from the Fairlie Railhead. Flasks were carried by road to the railhead and returned to the station the same route.

Whilst it was always the policy to remove items with a specific activity greater than 0.4Bq per gramme it became apparent that the ground and rail ballast at railhead facilities at Fairlie and indeed at other railheads across the UK had become slightly contaminated with radioactive contamination that washed off Magnox flasks in wet weather.

A survey of the siding where flasks parked in the siding at Fairlie Station in 1991 by the Strathclyde Regional Chemist concluded that ingestion of the soil in the area would give rise to a whole body dose of about 0.006 microSieverts per gramme, and that ingestion of the most contaminated ballast would give rise to 0.085 microSieverts per gramme. For comparison the natural background radiation dose rate is about 0.1 microSieverts per hour, and the constraint on the dose to the public from one location is 300 microSieverts per year. The risk to individuals from the railhead contamination was therefore minuscule.

Nevertheless legal advice obtained by the Power Station Operators Nuclear Electric and Scottish Nuclear as well as British Rail was that it was not acceptable under the Radioactive Substances Act 1960 to continue to operate with the levels of contamination that had been detected. A decision was made to remove all radioactivity from the railhead that had a specific activity greater than 0.4 Bq per gramme, which was the level set in the Substances of Low Activity (SOLA) Exemption Order (1986) under the Act.

During 1994 and 1995 detailed surveys were carried out and plans drawn up to remove the contamination and transport it to the national radioactive waste disposal facility at Drigg in Cumbria. It was estimated that approximately 25 cubic metres of rail ballast and 19 wooden sleepers would be removed. The total activity was estimated to be 20MBq of Cs 137 and 1.6 MBq of everything else. Contamination was removed mostly from directly beneath the track at the siding, the east of the siding area, at the Goliath crane, and at an area near the access gates to the compound.

Contamination levels on the ballast ranged from a few 10s of Bq per gramme to background. Most of the contamination was contained in the top 1 foot of ground.

The work was completed over a 2-day period using Transrail labour and Scottish Nuclear monitoring staff. Normal work clothing was worn because contamination levels did not warrant Contamination area Personal Protective Equipment. Clearance was by BP4 and GP23

probe and all activity greater than 0.4Bq per gramme was removed before the track was restored to its original condition.

By the time this work was carried out Hunterston 'A' had closed down and Magnox flask traffic had ceased. The railhead was subsequently removed to Clydeport. Survey results at Clydeport show no evidence of a build up of contamination at the new railhead

• **Source of the Contamination**

The main source of contamination in the ground at the Fairlie railhead was rainwater wash off of contamination on Magnox Flasks.

- The paintwork system of Magnox flasks was known to be imperfect. After cleaning to approximately background levels of removable contamination exposure to the elements was known to 'leach out' some of the fixed contamination such that it became movable and could be washed off by rain.
- The very great majority of contamination in the ground at Fairlie was Cs-137. This is the main contaminant of Magnox ponds and was at the time only a minor constituent in AGR Ponds.
- No recontamination occurred at Fairlie after the railhead was decontaminated nor is there any evidence of a contamination problem at Clydeport, which has been used exclusively for AGR flask traffic.

• **Conclusion**

Between 1966 and 1996 rain and the elements washed a small quantity of radioactivity was from flasks and flatrols parked at the Fairlie railhead into soil and ballast beneath the tracks. Whilst the quantity of radioactivity is of negligible significance for the purposes of radiological protection it was determined to be more than permitted by the radioactive Substances Act (1960). All radioactivity above the SOLA exception level of 0.4 Bq per gramme was removed and disposed of to the national repository at Drigg in Cumbria.

No further action is necessary.