

Please find below an update from Dr Malek Ghannad, Oldbury Site Inspector for the Office for Nuclear Regulation, further to his report issued at the SSG meeting on 20th April.

ONR - 1st April 2011

Following an announcement on 8 February 2011, the Government intends to bring forward legislation to create a new independent statutory body outside of the HSE to regulate the nuclear industry. The new statutory corporation will be known as the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and would take on the relevant functions currently carried out by the Health and Safety Executive and the Department for Transport.

The ONR will be a new independent regulator, formally responsible in law for delivering its regulatory functions. The creation of the ONR will consolidate civil nuclear and radioactive transport safety and security regulation in one place.

The proposal will not affect the current regulatory requirements or standards with which industry must comply, and the vast majority of the costs of the regulator would continue to be recovered in charges from operators in the nuclear industry rather than funded by the public purse. Additional organisational costs will be entirely met by the nuclear industry.

Pending the legislation, the Health and Safety Executive has established ONR as a non-statutory body from 1 April 2011, signalling its commitment to secure an appropriately-resourced and responsive regulator for the future challenges of the nuclear sector. The Government will review the functions and processes of the interim body in order to inform its planned legislation.

Following this announcement, work is ongoing to continue the move to ONR. However, business as usual remains unaffected. If you have any further questions, please contact ONREnquiries@hse.gsi.gov.uk.

Fukushima report

The Government has asked the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) for a report on the implications and lessons learned for the UK nuclear industry of the unprecedented events unfolding in Japan. ONR's Chief Inspector, Mike Weightman has full independence to determine the scope of the report and the arrangements for conducting it.

An interim report is due by mid May and the full report by September. These are technical nuclear safety reports and will assess the implications of the unprecedented events in Japan and establish if lessons are to be learned. The reports will not address nuclear or energy policy issues, nor will they be a wholesale review of nuclear safety in the UK.