

## **Introduction**

This report covers the Environment Agency's regulation of Oldbury nuclear power station and related issues.

## **Radioactive substances regulation**

### **Permitting**

No changes to the Environment Permit have been made since the reissue of the Permit in November 2011. We are considering proposals by the site to change some arrangements after their review of the CEAR document earlier in the year.

### **Regulation**

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 also check compliance with the permit by making regular inspections at Oldbury. Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCAR) detailing our inspections and non-compliances found are put on the Public Register.

Our work at Oldbury has been focussed on the following themes and issues in the last quarter:

- Attendance at the annual review meeting (see later).
- Preparations for the forthcoming emergency exercise at Oldbury.
- Changes to the sampling and monitoring of radioactive gaseous discharges from the site to better reflect end of generation.
- Changes to the environmental monitoring programme for the site to better reflect end of generation.
- Potential changes to liquid discharge arrangements for the period post-cooling of the reactors.

## **Annual review**

We have recently attended the annual environmental review for the Oldbury site. This meeting reviews the site's performance over the last year and also looks forward to the year ahead. For operating sites these meetings are kept separate from the site's annual review of safety which ONR attends. However, as Oldbury is no longer an operating power station the annual review has now been combined with the annual review of safety. This is the standard approach for these meetings at other post-generation Magnox sites.

The meeting went well, with both the regulators and the site satisfied with the format of the new meeting. The Environment Agency continues to consider the Oldbury site to be one of the top performing Magnox stations.

### **EA regulator attendance at the SSG**

I would like to apologise for not being able to attend the SSG meeting in July 2013 (and the other two meetings this year). Unfortunately I am on annual leave for most of July and therefore cannot attend. I will be attending the combined Oldbury/Berkeley SSG meeting in November.

### **Enforcement**

No enforcement action has been necessary since the last SSG meeting.

### **Discharge reports**

The operator at Oldbury is 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<sup>[1]</sup>.

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<sup>[1]</sup> <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/37793.aspx>

Liquid and gaseous discharges from Oldbury are at levels well within the requirements of its permitted limits. No Quarterly Notification Levels (QNLs) have been exceeded in the period.

### **Foods Standards Agency consultation**

As mentioned in my previous report, the Foods Standards Agency (FSA) recently undertook a consultation on the future of their radiological monitoring programme. The FSA has now published its response to the issues raised by consultee. The FSA board subsequently approved the proposal for an optimised radiological monitoring programme option as described in the original consultation documentation.

Further details can be found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/consultations/consultations-england/2012/radioactivity-consult>

### **Environmental impact**

In the site permit we specify a rigorous environmental monitoring programme that requires the operator to monitor and assess the impact of their discharges on the environment. This monitoring demonstrates that the impact of the site on the environment is low.

The Environment Agencies and Food Standards Agency also carry out an independent environmental monitoring around nuclear sites. The results of this work are published annually and the latest report "Radioactivity in Food and the Environment 2011" (RIFE 2011) is now published on the Environment Agency website<sup>[2]</sup>.

In the RIFE report, the Oldbury and Berkeley sites are considered together for the purposes of environmental monitoring because the effects of both are on the same area. The RIFE report presents a yearly assessment of radiological dose to the group of people in the local population who are most exposed to radiation from the sites. In 2011, the total dose to this group of people was 0.006 mSv. This is a decrease from the figure of 0.011 mSv in 2010 and is the result of a decrease in the

radiological dose due to direct radiation (also known as radiation shine). This radiological dose is far below the Government Dose limit of 1 mSv/year and even smaller compared to the average amount of radiation we all receive from natural sources each year which is around 2.7 mSv.

### **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 the Environment Agency website<sup>[3]</sup>.

The Environment Agency's Lead Regulator for the Oldbury site is Robert MacGregor. Robert is a Nuclear Regulator and part of the national Nuclear Regulation Group (South) and is based at our Wallingford office.

While his principal office is in Oxfordshire, Robert provides expertise on the environmental regulation of radioactive substances on and from nuclear licensed sites in southern England and Wales. He also acts as the lead Nuclear Regulator for Sizewell A and the Maynard Centre in Wales. He works with local Environment Agency teams in East Anglia and South West England and with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in Wales.

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

<sup>[3]</sup> <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/32517.aspx>