

Sizewell A Report – March 2014

Prepared: 18 February 2014

Safety and compliance

There have been no operating rule breaches since the last meeting.

As at 18 February 2014 it has been 826 days (c. 27 months) since the site's last Lost Time Accident.

Storage of low level waste

It has been identified that a room being used for storage of low level waste (LLW) had a safety case for storage of intermediate level waste in place, but not for LLW. While this was an oversight with no safety implications, it did put the site outwith the terms of its nuclear site licence.

A justification has been made to the Office for Nuclear Regulation for continued storage of LLW in this area and a safety case is being prepared. An investigation is also under way to identify what improvements are required to reduce the risk of a similar occurrence in the future.

People

The site currently has a workforce of 433, comprised of:

- 314 Magnox staff,
- 12 agency-supplied workers, and
- 107 contractors.

Defuelling

Since the last meeting of the stakeholder group, reliability of the fuel route machinery has improved as a result of sustained effort from maintenance, engineering and operations personnel. Defuelling rates have increased accordingly and, at the time of writing, both fuelling machines were in service with defuelling continuing to progress well on both reactors.

The reactors are now around 85 per cent defuelled with 64 flasks of fuel remaining to be despatched. With operators packing fuel elements into skips more efficiently, the total number of flasks required to complete defuelling has been reduced by two with further reductions expected.

With current performance, Sizewell A remains confident of reaching its target of shipping 240 tonnes of fuel in 2013/14 by the middle of March. That positions the site well to complete defuelling by the Department of Energy and Climate Change target of September 2014.

Current defuelling status (at 18 February 2014)

	% Defuelled	Elements remaining	% Verified fuel-free
Reactor One	86.29%	3628	44.71%
Reactor Two	84.30%	4157	53.91%
	Elements	Skips	
Pond stock	2856	15	
	Tonnes	Flasks	
Despatched (total)	509.31	252	
Despatched (YTD)	213.40	104	

The site is undertaking its own fuel-free verification process in parallel to defuelling operations. This means that on completion of defuelling, there will be no delay in making a case to the Office for Nuclear Regulation for the site to be declared fuel-free.

Transition to decommissioning structure

Magnox staff will be advised next week of the role they will be performing post-defuelling. This is a significant point in the transition process and the culmination of a lengthy and intensive consultation with staff.

Staff will be notified individually and, in the case of those on site on that day, in person. The majority of physical work on site will be paused to allow staff to consider their own news without having to focus on safety critical tasks.

As previously advised, a reduction in the workforce of around 80 personnel is anticipated, but that reduction will not involve any compulsory redundancies. Site management continues to work closely with the trades unions on all aspects of this transition, and to support those affected.

Emergency preparedness

The site recently demonstrated its on-site emergency arrangements to the satisfaction of the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

This marks the final annual demonstration of the current arrangements. Once defuelling has been completed, and the site's radiological hazard reduced by more than 99 per cent, new emergency arrangements will be implemented. Training for those new arrangements commences in May 2014 and Magnox will demonstrate the new arrangements to the ONR in 2015.

Intermediate level waste sludge

The site has developed a simple, cost-effective solution to consolidate its intermediate level waste (ILW) sludge in one location.

A flexible double-walled pipeline and submersible pump were installed in the wash collection tank enabling transfer of sludge to the active effluent tank (AET) which already holds ILW sludge. The arrangement will remain in place until the plant is decommissioned, simplifying clean-up.

The solution also means the site's final active waste tanks can be isolated permanently and arrangements made for disposal of the low level waste sludge within them.

The majority of ILW sludge is now in the AET, easily accessible for the ILW Programme when it comes to retrieving, conditioning and packaging that waste. The tank is also adjacent to the fuel storage pond – which holds the only other ILW sludge on site – making retrieval in the future straightforward.

The approach to the actual transfer saw the team replace the metal lid of the wash collection tank with a see-through plastic lid. Lighting was provided by some very low-tech torches placed on top of the Perspex lid. A pressure washer mobilised the sludge enough to get it pumped up and out of the tank.



Planning for the future

Active effluent treatment plant: tank refurbishment

Project purpose: Overhaul the ageing active effluent treatment plant, ensuring it remains operable and compliant for the essential role of maintaining pond water conditions during defuelling and for effluent treatment in decommissioning.

Relining of final monitoring and delay tank one – one of the largest tanks being refurbished, measuring 25'3" x 17'8" x 17'0" – has been completed and the tank returned to service.

With the ILW sludge transfer – mentioned above – completed, the team has been able to complete a man entry into the wash collection tank (WCT). Engineers have confirmed that the lining of that tank does not require immediate attention.

As a result of that finding, final monitoring and delay tank two will be the next tank in the programme to be relined. The WCT – the final tank to be refurbished – will be relined thereafter.

Electrical overlay

Project purpose: Provide alternative electrical infrastructure to meet the needs of Care and Maintenance. Completion is a key enabler for demolition of conventional plant and structures.

The electrical overlay system is in place; all that remains is to enable the off-site connection from Sizewell B.

Work continues on installation of the 11kV supply cable with the project teams at A and B sites working closely to ensure connection before July 2014.

Control and instrumentation overlay

Project purpose: Provide sustainable control and instrumentation infrastructure, ensuring compliance and business continuity through the site's Care and Maintenance phase and beyond.

The installation of new alarm, fire detection, security, IT and telecoms systems is complete. The new radio system is fully tested and ready for commissioning. These alternative systems are a key enabler in the workforce retreating from demolition areas and leaving redundant buildings ready for full isolation and demolition.

Fukushima response

Project purpose: Identify and implement plant enhancements and management arrangements that will increase the site's resilience to an extreme event.

All physical work has now been completed on this project. Once procedures have been established and training for operators completed, the stand-by equipment will be handed over and put into service.

Railway maintenance

Response to question asked by Bill Howard at last meeting (minute 2135)

Network Rail is responsible for maintaining the railway network, including the line to Sizewell Halt; it funds that maintenance itself. This situation will be unaffected by completion of defuelling at Sizewell A.

With the proposed development of Sizewell C, Network Rail advises that it has no intention of closing the line.

Socio-economic Scheme

Ogilvie Charity

The scheme has recently committed funding towards a new greenhouse for use by residents in sheltered housing near Aldringham.

Leiston Longshop Museum

With funding from Magnox, the Longshop Museum will be running a series of events to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of World War I.

Framlingham SausageFest

The local business association has successfully bid for funding to support the now annual SausageFest, intended to boost the number of visits to Framlingham and spending in the town this autumn.

Applications from local groups are encouraged, at www.magnoxsocioeconomic.com.

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