

This report covers the Environment Agency's regulation of Sizewell A & B nuclear sites and related issues for the period between March and May 2014.

Our 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 Sizewell A & B.

Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCAR) detailing our inspections and non-compliances found are put on the Public Register.

We also regulate other activities through our environmental permits, including surface water discharges to surrounding water bodies to protect water quality and emissions to air from emergency diesel generators. We are also the Joint Technical authority, alongside the Office for Nuclear Regulation, for the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) regulations that apply to Sizewell B.

New Website

The Environment Agency (EA) has now changed over to the government website (gov.uk). There is currently an automatic redirection from the old EA website to the new EA website within gov.uk. A link to the new site is shown in the contacts section at the end of this report.

Current Regulatory Activities

Sizewell A

There have been no reported environmentally significant events since our last report to the SSG.

We have not undertaken any additional site inspections at Sizewell A since the last SSG meeting. We have undertaken off-site assessments in the following areas:

- A review of information provided by the site during the gaseous waste inspection

conducted in March and further assessment of best available techniques applied to gaseous discharges and associated monitoring arrangements.

- A review of the site's monitoring and analysis arrangements was carried out after the annual submission of discharge data. This looked at how operator collected samples are analysed and reported. This provided reassurance that reported information on discharges is accurate.

We have finalised our work programme for this financial year which will result in five formal site inspections being carried out at Sizewell A. This is in addition to off-site technical assessments and the review of monitoring data.

Sizewell B

There have been no reported environmentally significant events since our last report to the SSG.

During the last quarter we have undertaken two inspections at Sizewell B:

- A handover inspection between the outgoing inspector, Gary McMeekan, and the incoming inspector, Stuart Parr, in March. The inspection was wide ranging to give an overview to the incoming inspector. No non-compliances were identified during the course of the inspection.
- In April, an inspection of radioactive liquid effluent management and discharge reporting processes was completed. No non-compliances were identified during the course of the inspection.

We also reviewed the station's annual submission to us describing how radioactive waste discharges and disposals are being minimised through the application of Best Available Techniques (BAT).

We also attended some meetings tracking progress with the construction of the Dry Fuel Store at Sizewell B. We will assess relevant parts of the store safety case in support of the Office for Nuclear Regulation's assessment. We will also assess EdF's BAT assessment for the store as part of our regulatory process once it becomes available.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been necessary at either A and B sites since the last report to the Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group in March 2014.

Discharge Reports

The operators at Sizewell A and B are required to report liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment to us on a regular basis. These reports are placed on the public register and a digest of information is available via the Environment Agency section on the gov.uk website: 'What's in your backyard?'.

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

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

Environmental Monitoring

Nuclear sites are required to carry out a rigorous environmental monitoring programme that requires the operator to monitor and assess the impact of their discharges on the environment

Additionally, the Environment Agencies and Food Standards Agency carry out independent environmental monitoring around nuclear sites. The results of this work and our assessment of radiation dose to members of the public are published annually in the report "Radioactivity in Food and the Environment" (RIFE).

Understanding Risk

The Environment Agency is undertaking a project to help the public understand more about flood risk. We are bringing members of the public together with scientists, policy makers and others to talk about risk, how it is communicated and how it is understood. If you would like to know more about this project, please visit the project website: <http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/public-communication-and-engagement-on-risk/>.

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 section of the gov.uk website.

Contacts

The Environment Agency's Lead Regulator for the Sizewell A and Sizewell B sites are Andrew Pynn and Stuart Parr respectively. Andrew and Stuart are both Nuclear Regulators and part of the Nuclear Regulation Group (South) which is based at the Environment Agency's Wallingford office in Oxfordshire.

Andrew and Stuart undertake environmental regulation of radioactive substances on nuclear licensed sites in southern England and Wales. They work closely with the local Environment Agency teams in those areas as well as external bodies such as the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

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