

Report to Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group

December 2015

This report covers the Environment Agency's regulation of Sizewell A & B nuclear sites and related issues for the period between September 2015 and November 2015.

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 check compliance with the permits by making regular inspections at Sizewell A & B.

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

We also regulate and control other activities through our environmental permits, including surface water discharges to surrounding water bodies and emissions to air from emergency diesel generators. We are also the joint technical authority, alongside the Health & Safety Executive for the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) regulations that apply to Sizewell B.

Current Regulatory Activities

Sizewell A

Asset management inspection

An inspection on the arrangements for asset management was undertaken on 8th September. There were some recommendations given but no non-compliances found.

Ponds decommissioning

A meeting was held on the 9th September to discuss the way forward for decommissioning the ponds at Sizewell A. Enablers for ponds decommissioning will be put in place over the months ahead.

Sizewell A has also been involved in a trial of using divers to undertake decommissioning tasks in the fuel ponds. Magnox is undertaking this trial to enable tasks such as the cutting up of pond skips to be undertaken whilst they are still in the ponds. Sizewell has been taking part in a trial involving a dummy diver to check how pond chemistry could be affected by using divers.

We have also been in discussion with Magnox and Sizewell A regarding the disposal of waste from the ponds decommissioning.

We will be discussing with Sizewell A the various initiatives for pond decommissioning in the future.

District survey laboratory

As the environmental monitoring program is now undertaken by Sizewell B, the district survey laboratory is being decommissioned and the permit will be surrendered in due course.

Sizewell B

Together with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), we attended the Midcycle Review meeting in September. The meeting is an important part of the regulatory calendar and is an opportunity to reflect on recent performance and the lessons learnt for future operations. Overall environmental performance of the power station has been good.

In November we participated in an inspection alongside the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) looking at how SZB will manage the records associated with the Dry Fuel Store. The keeping of appropriate records is a requirement of the Environmental Permit. The inspection found that SZB is compliant with their Environmental Permit.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been necessary at Sizewell A or B since the last report to the Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group in June 2015.

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 both Sizewell A and Sizewell B sites were at levels well within permitted limits and no Quarterly Notification Levels (QNLs) were exceeded in the period.

Other News

Publication of RIFE 20

The annual 'Radioactivity in Food and the Environment' (RIFE) report presents results of nation-wide monitoring programmes conducted by the Environment Agencies and the Food Standards Agency. These monitoring programmes support our regulatory function and provide a check that public radiation exposures are within legal limits. The report was published on 28 October 2015 and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radio-activity-in-food-and-the-environment-2014-rife-20>

This is the 20th edition of RIFE containing information on radiation exposures (doses) to the public and radioactivity levels in the environment during 2014. It covers radioactivity near to nuclear fuel production and reprocessing sites, research establishments, nuclear power stations, defence establishments, radiochemical production, industrial and landfill sites, and non-nuclear sectors. It also reports on regional monitoring away from these sites, which provides a check on background radiation levels.

The report for 2014 continues to show that total doses to the public, from permitted discharges and direct radiation around nuclear sites, remained well below the legal limit of 1000 μSv per year. Note that the unit for measuring radiation dose is the Sievert (Sv) and 1 Sv is a very large amount of radioactivity. In this article reference is made to micro-Sieverts (μSv) and 1 μSv is one-millionth of a Sv (0.000001 Sv)

At Sizewell, results showed that total radiation doses (from all pathways and sources of man-made radiation, including medical uses of radiation, fallout from accidents and historical weapons testing) were similar in 2014 to those reported in 2013:

- 20 μSv in 2014
- 21 μSv in 2013

For comparison, a typical dental x-ray gives a radiation dose of 5 μSv ⁱ. Specific assessments for particular populations, for example consumers

of locally sourced produce, were less than the total dose in 2014.

2015 Flood Action Campaign

With winter now upon us, the Environment Agency is running a flood awareness campaign to encourage you to act now to prepare for a flood. Many people think that flooding will never happen to them - but it could. The winter of 2013 to 2014 was the wettest in England for nearly 250 years and around 11,000 residential and commercial properties were flooded.

Have you ever checked to see if you are at risk from flooding? Would you know what to do in a flood? What could you do now to save you time, money and worry if it happened tomorrow?

- Visit <http://www.gov.uk/floodsdestroy> to take the following simple steps to help protect you, your family and home from flooding.
- Use the Environment Agency's maps to find out if you are at risk from flooding
- Check if free flood warnings are available for your area
- Prepare a personal flood plan

Take these small steps now and help save you time, money and distress in a flood.

New Chief Executive

Sir James Bevan has been appointed the new Chief Executive of the Environment Agency. Sir James will replace Dr Paul Leinster who retired in September.

Sir James is an experienced UK civil servant with more than thirty year's experience in the UK and abroad and a deep knowledge of government. In his current role as High Commissioner to India he currently heads the UK government's biggest overseas operation in the world.

Sir James will take-up his post later this year.

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incident hotline
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floodline
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www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Contacts

The Environment Agency's Lead Regulator for the Sizewell A and Sizewell B sites are Phil Fahey and Stuart Parr respectively. Phil 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.

Phil 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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ⁱ Source: Public Health England. Ionising radiation: dose comparisons. Published 18 March 2011. Retrieved 06 November 2015 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ionising-radiation-dose-comparisons/ionising-radiation-dose-comparisons>