

Report to Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group

December 2016

This report covers the Environment Agency's regulation of Sizewell A & B nuclear sites and related issues for the period between September 2016 and November 2016.

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

We have carried out two inspection visits since the last SSG meeting.

On the 18th and 19th October 2016 we carried out an inspection at Sizewell A as part of the Environment Agency's national waste themed audit. We identified no non-compliances but made some recommendations.

On 6th and 7th December we carried out a joint inspection with the Office of Nuclear Regulation on solid radioactive waste. We also had a catch up meeting before the inspection with the Operator where we discussed various site related issues and how decommissioning is progressing. We will report on this inspection visit at the next SSG.

On 3rd November 2016, we attended the second joint South East sites meeting on waste strategy and permissioning with Magnox and the Office for Nuclear Regulation. These meetings take place on a regular basis and have been set up to improve coordination between Magnox and the regulators on topics of interest affecting Sizewell A, Dungeness A and Bradwell.

Environmental Monitoring Programme

It was reported at the last SSG meeting that the environmental monitoring programme results that had previously found very small amounts of strontium 90 in marine sediment were not of any regulatory interest nor any cause for concern. We have asked the Operator to send the report of the investigation that they have carried out to the SSG when it is available.

Change in the compilation of Environment Agency Requirements Approvals and Specifications

In October 2016 we issued a new version of the Compilation of Environment Agency Requirements, Approvals and Specifications (CEARAS) for Sizewell A. The CEARAS accompanies the permit and gives more detail as to the requirements the Operator needs to fulfil to ensure compliance to certain conditions in the permit.

The main purpose of the change was to include a schedule for records retention. This is a first on nuclear site. As well as some administrative changes the new version of the CEARAS also includes new wording to describe minor gaseous outlets. Minor outlets must collectively discharge less than 1% of the permit limit.

Sizewell B

We undertook an inspection on characterisation of radioactive waste at Sizewell B, as part of our National Themed Inspection programme. This involved looking into how the station identifies, categorises and disposes of its radioactive waste streams to ensure that waste volumes are minimised and the best disposal routes are used.

From our inspection we noted no non-compliances with regard to the characterisation of radioactive waste. Sizewell B has a good understanding of the types of radioactive wastes it produces, where they come from and for ensuring that the disposal options

for these wastes represent the Best Available Techniques (BAT). We noted some examples of good practice, particularly in ensuring that waste samples underwent the most appropriate radiochemical analysis. We will publish our national report of our waste characterisation inspection findings from across the nuclear industry in spring 2017.

We supported Suffolk County Council in their recent emergency exercise that tested the resilience of responding agencies in the unlikely event of a severe off-site radiological emergency at Sizewell B. The EA would be closely involved in the response to any such event.

Enforcement

We have taken no enforcement action and noted no non-compliances during the period September – November 2016.

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 21

The annual 'Radioactivity in Food and the Environment' (RIFE) report presents results of nationwide 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 26 October 2016 and can be found [here](#):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radioactivity-in-food-and-the-environment-2015-rife-21>

This is the 21st edition of RIFE containing information on radiation exposures (doses) to the public and radioactivity levels in the environment during 2015. 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 2015 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 μ Sv 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 (μ Sv) and 1 μ Sv 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 2015 to those reported in 2014:

- 21 μ Sv in 2015
- 20 μ Sv in 2014

For comparison, a typical dental x-ray gives a radiation dose of 5 μ Sv.

Flood awareness

The EA launched its winter 2016 flood awareness campaign in November encouraging people and communities to take some simple actions to prepare themselves for a flood event.

The winter floods of 2015/16 caused flooding to over 20,000 properties. Repairs to the damage caused by flood water from the floods cost on average £50,000 per domestic property (source ABI).

Taking three simple actions could help:

- 1) **Think** - know if you're at risk from flooding
- 2) **Feel** - understand the action you can take to protect your home and business
- 3) **Do** - take action to protect lives, reduce risk and increase resilience

Communities are more resilient to flooding when they work as a team. Having a community action plan to help people work together in times of crisis can reduce the local impacts of flooding. Find out more from your local Flood Resilience Engagement Officer.

Creating a flood plan doesn't take long, and is proven to help during emergency situations. Download a template for your home or business from our website and get yourself prepared for flooding.

<https://floodsdestroy.campaign.gov.uk/>

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
0345 988 1188
0845 988 1188

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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