

# Oldbury Site SSG Report

2 November 2016 meeting

**This report covers our regulation of Oldbury Site and related issues over the period since the last Oldbury SSG meeting on 27 July 2016.**

## Radioactive Substances Regulation

We regulate radioactive waste disposals to deliver the best outcome for the environment. We do this by placing limits and conditions in the environmental permits that help us ensure radioactive waste discharges are minimised and the environment is protected. We carry out regular checks of Magnox's compliance with our regulatory requirements at Oldbury Site.

### Site Inspection

We continue to check compliance with the permit by making inspections at intervals at Oldbury Site. We prepare Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCARs) detailing our inspections and any non-compliances identified. These reports are placed on our public register.

Since the last SSG meeting, we have carried out two site inspections. The first of these focused on reviewing Magnox's approach to and arrangements for facilities management at Oldbury Site.

The most recent inspection looked at Magnox's arrangements at Oldbury Site for the control of radioactive gaseous waste discharges and to ensure that the discharges are minimised through the application of best available techniques (BAT). This inspection was undertaken jointly with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) due to areas of shared interest between the two regulators.

During the inspections we (the Environment Agency) did not identify any non-compliances. However, we provided Magnox with regulatory advice and guidance to make improvements in line with best practice.

In addition to our own inspection activities we routinely review Magnox's reports of events and incidents occurring on site.

We received notification from Magnox that it is investigating a potential increase in leakage rate from Oldbury Site's storage ponds, following results obtained from a routine check. At present Magnox suspects that a parallel trial to switch off the pond water cooling system has resulted in increased evaporation rates from the ponds and that this is what has caused pond water levels to reduce. Magnox is continuing to investigate and monitor this issue. We await the outcome of Magnox's investigation.

### Enforcement

We have not taken any enforcement actions at Oldbury in the period since the previous Oldbury SSG meeting.

## Annual Regional Review of Safety, Security and Environment (ARROSSE)

We attended the inaugural ARROSSE for Magnox's South West sites (Berkeley, Oldbury and Hinkley Point A). We noted the generally good environmental performance by Magnox at Oldbury Site over a period that included the final removal of spent nuclear fuel from the site.

### Environmental Permitting

We have met with Magnox to discuss the permitting requirements relating to discharges of saline water from a proposed Reverse Osmosis plant to treat mains water at Oldbury Site. Magnox will need a new environmental permit before commencing this activity and we anticipate a permit application in due course.

## Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) Strategy

We are continuing our work together with the ONR to advise Magnox on regulatory issues at Oldbury Site. We provide advice to Magnox on the potential environmental considerations associated with its plans to progress the site through decommissioning, including Magnox's proposals for managing ILW at Oldbury Site.

There is no specific update on Magnox's ILW strategy for Oldbury Site since what was included in the report to the last SSG meeting.

## Discharge Reports

Nuclear sites are required to routinely report to us their liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment. We review these reports for compliance and this work is detailed in a RASCAR, which is placed on our public register.

We have assessed the monthly reports from Magnox of Oldbury Site's radioactive gaseous and liquid waste discharges to the environment. Our assessment confirms that radioactive gaseous and liquid discharges from Oldbury site remain low and are well within the requirements of the permit.

Overall the levels of gaseous and liquid discharges remain far below the levels when Oldbury was an operating power station.

## Environmental Monitoring

We have carried out sampling and analysis under our independent environmental monitoring programme.

The independent monitoring data indicates that the levels of radioactivity found in the environment remain low and close to background levels.

The monitoring data for the calendar year 2015 will be included in this year's Radioactivity in Food and the Environment report (RIFE 21), which is due for publication on 27 October 2016.

In parallel, Magnox's permit for Oldbury Site includes a requirement to carry out a suitable environmental monitoring programme, to monitor and assess the impact of the site's discharges on the environment.

We have reviewed the monitoring data from Magnox's programme and conclude that it continues to indicate that the level of radioactivity in the environment is low.

We make the information from both the Magnox and our own environmental monitoring programmes, available on our public register.

## Further Information

The Environment Agency website has now moved to GOV.UK. Further information on our role in regulating the use of radioactive substances and related activities on nuclear licensed sites can be found on the GOV.UK website [1].

The Environment Agency's Lead Regulator for Oldbury Site is Rob Green, based in the Nuclear Regulation Group (South), NRG(S).

NRG(S) is responsible for the environmental regulation of radioactive waste disposals on or from nuclear licensed sites in southern England (and in south Wales, on behalf of Natural Resources Wales). We also work closely with the local Environment Agency teams in Wessex Area in relation to other Environment Agency roles and responsibilities.

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[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-regulation-in-the-environment-agency>