

Introduction

This report covers the Environment Agency's (EA) regulation of the Magnox Winfrith nuclear licensed site and site tenant (Tradebe-Inutec) from November 2016 to April 2017.

Radioactive substances regulation

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 permit by site inspections and documentation reviews. Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCAR) detailing our inspections, are entered into the Public Register. We also review discharge and environmental monitoring reports submitted to the Environment Agency by the site operators at intervals specified in their permits.

Site Inspections

Since the last SSG we have visited both Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec to review operator arrangements and inspect solid waste management activities at Winfrith and tenant site (Tradebe-Inutec).

We provided advice and guidance to the operators and found the sites to be compliant with their permits.

Site Meetings

We have attended several site meetings to review progress with decommissioning plans. This has included regular meetings (jointly with staff from the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)) to cover site projects (SGHWR, ALES and Dragon, and estates management).

We have attended a stakeholder workshop and management meetings with Winfrith staff to consider the development of a future decommissioning end state. We have also met with Tradebe-Inutec to consider their progress

in achieving an independent nuclear permitted site.

Permitting

No changes have been made to the Environmental Permit for Winfrith. We intend to review both Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec permits during 2017. These changes are required to regulate the transfer of land and operational responsibility to Tradebe-Inutec and cover the implementation of alternative routes for liquid waste disposal once the Winfrith ALES plant closes.

Incidents and enforcement

Since the last SSG, Winfrith have reported a mis-consignment of a small quantity of metallic wastes sent with other wastes destined for combustion at the Fawley incinerator.

There were no environmental consequences associated with this transfer and the wastes were returned to Winfrith for an alternative disposal route. However, the Environment Agency consider that this event represented a breach of the Winfrith Environmental Regulations permit under our Compliance Classification assessment Scheme (CCS). We have assigned the breach as a CCS 3 and a separate CCS 4 score (as an event requiring minimal regulatory engagement). We have dealt with this breach through advice and guidance.

The site have reacted positively to the event and have put a range of processes in place to reduce the risk of errors of this nature. However, the management, storage and handling of wastes will continue to remain a high priority for subsequent inspections during 2017.

Discharge reports

Both Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec are required to report liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment on a quarterly basis. These reports are placed on the public register and a digest of information is available via the

Environment Agency website's 'What's in your backyard?' facility^[1].

Limits are set in the permits to control the maximum level of radioactivity that can be emitted to atmosphere or to controlled waters over any rolling twelve month period.

Liquid effluent discharges from both Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec remain well below permit limits.

Gaseous discharges also remain compliant and below permitted limits.

Environmental monitoring

Winfrith site undertakes a programme of monitoring of radioactivity in the environment. Results from this programme are used to assess site impact on the environment.

The Environment Agency carries out independent environmental monitoring, and together with data collected by the Food Standards Agency is used to calculate the dose to the public at all nuclear sites in England and Wales. Results are presented in the "Radioactivity in Food and the Environment" Report (RIFE)².

The most recent report, RIFE 21, (for the 2015 calendar year), was released in October 2016. Public exposure from emissions to air and water from Winfrith remain very low approximating to less than 1% of the Government derived maximum dose to members of the public.

Looking Ahead:

We are working closely with the NDA, other regulators and stakeholders (e.g. Local Authorities) to assess Magnox plans and are developing our own work plan to cover the accelerated decommissioning period.

Winfrith remains one of 3 pilot sites across the UK to aid the development of a structured approach to the future regulation of decommissioning facilities.

The requirement to regulate the waste management activities during decommissioning will result in more resources

focussed at Winfrith during 2017, compared to previous years.

We will continue to assist Inutec-Tradebe in attaining their goal of a nuclear site licence in 2017 while maintaining appropriate regulatory controls and minimising the impact on the environment.

From 01 April, Peter Reynolds will be moving from regulation of the Tradebe-Inutec site to focus on other areas of the UK nuclear fleet. His regulatory position will be replaced by Karl Littlewood. Karl has previously worked as a nuclear regulator on a number of Magnox sites and will oversee the future permitting changes at Tradebe-Inutec.

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 GOV.UK website^[3].

The Environment Agency's lead Nuclear Regulator for the Magnox Winfrith site is Adam Davis. Peter Reynolds regulates Tradebe-Inutec. Adam and Karl are part of the national Nuclear Regulation Group (South).

Note: Members of the local Environment Agency team cover the site for other general (non-radioactive substances) environment protection matters such as regulation of groundwater, contaminated land, waste management and water abstraction. Contacts for these activities can be arranged through Adam Davis.

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^[1] <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx>

²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/472906/RIFE20.pdf

^[3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-regulation-in-the-environment-agency>