

Introduction

This report covers the Environment Agency's (EA) regulation of the Magnox Winfrith nuclear licensed site and site tenant (Tradebe-Inutec) from October 2017 to April 2018.

Radioactive substances regulation

Regulation

We regulate radioactive waste disposals. 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

In December 2017, we completed an inspection to assess the combined Magnox Harwell and Winfrith environmental baseline resource and technical capability (as Suitably Qualified Experienced Persons (SQEP)) to maintain environmental compliance. There were no non-compliance issues, and we observed examples of good environmental management practice, applied across both the sites.

We have also met key Magnox and tenant staff and maintained regular review telephone conference calls to discuss compliance.

Since the last report, our resources have been primarily focussed on the planning and development requirements for a Winfrith site-wide decommissioning and restoration plan, and separately, progress the tenant site (Tradebe-Inutec) request to seek an independent nuclear site permit.

On 17/18 of April we conducted a joint inspection with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) assessing the sites arrangements for the generation, storage and disposal of wastes. The results of this inspection will be reported on completion of the review.

Other Site Meetings

We have continued to work closely with the operator, the ONR and other stakeholders (Local

Authority -Town and Country Planning teams) to develop the wider aspects of site remediation and restoration plans.

The Environment Agency, ONR and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency have developed joint guidance to the industry, on Requirements for Decommissioning Nuclear Sites (GRR). The guidance is approaching final stages of approval but unlikely to be released until the summer of 2018.

Magnox Winfrith will continue to progress decommissioning and restoration at Winfrith as one of the key pilot sites across the UK-to aid the development of a structured approach to the future regulation under the GRR process.

Whilst there is clearly a lot of engineering and civil work required to meet a proposed Interim End State of 2023, subject to development of a wider communications plan, we consider the site's arrangements are adequate for this stage in the process.

We continue to review progress with the programmed decommissioning work. This has included regular meetings (jointly with staff from the ONR) to cover Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) retrievals from SGHWR, and Dragon reactors; and associated treatment and storage pending future off site disposal.

In addition, we have met the operator to:

- Ensure that Magnox-Winfrith develop an appropriate Materials Management Plan to manage the generation and storage of construction and demolition type wastes derived from the removal of buildings on the site (as part of an overall decommissioning plan).

We have continued meetings with Tradebe-Inutec to consider their progress in achieving an independent nuclear permitted site. We are also continuing to meet both Magnox and Tradebe-Inutec to consider separation of site infrastructure and facilities.

Permitting

In December 2017, we varied the Tradebe-Inutec discharge permit allow the development of alternative disposal routes for liquid waste to accommodate the future closure of the Winfrith Active Liquid Effluent (ALES) plant. We also expect to receive applications to vary the Magnox-Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec permits to allow the transfer of land and operational responsibility for the area of the site occupied by Tradebe-Inutec. This will allow Tradebe-Inutec to continue operating after the closure of the Magnox site. We would hope to conclude this variation review by mid-2018.

Incidents and enforcement

Since the last SSG, there have been no non-compliances noted.

Discharge reports

Both Winfrith and Tradebe-Inutec are required to report liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment on a quarterly basis. 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)¹.

The environmental reporting from site and corroborated evidence through our independent monitoring, indicates that the dose to individuals and members of the public from discharges from the site continue to remain very low. Total dose from all pathways approximate to levels less than 1 % of the national dose limits set to protect members of the public.

Looking Ahead:

We will continue to work closely with the NDA, other regulators, stakeholders (e.g. Local Authorities) to assess Magnox plans.

The resources required to regulate the site during the next phase of decommissioning will remain at levels equivalent to those allocated within this financial year.

We will continue to assist Inutec-Tradebe in attaining their goal of a nuclear site licence in 2018, while maintaining appropriate regulatory controls and minimising the impact on the environment.

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^[2].

The Environment Agency's lead Nuclear Regulator for the Magnox Winfrith site is Adam Davis. Karl Littlewood 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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¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/563010/RIFE21.pdf

^[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-regulation-in-the-environment-agency>