

Oldbury Site SSG Report

31 October 2018 meeting

This report covers our regulation of Oldbury Site and related issues over the period August to October 2018

Radioactive Substances Regulation

We regulate radioactive waste disposals to the environment. We do this by placing limits and conditions in environmental permits, which helps us to ensure that radioactive waste discharges are minimised and that the environment is protected. We carry out regular checks of Magnox's compliance with our regulatory requirements.

Site Regulation

We check compliance with the permit by undertaking inspections at the 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. In addition to our own inspection activities we routinely review Magnox's reports of events and incidents occurring on site and follow-up on these where appropriate.

We have carried out one site inspection at Oldbury since our last report to the SSG. The inspection reviewed the management and arrangements relating to Low Activity Waste (LAW) and its disposal. We looked at the arrangements for tracking, storage, and clearance of waste. The inspection concluded that arrangements in place at Oldbury are adequate to support the application of Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the management and disposal of LAW. No non-compliances were identified, but one recommendation was made.

We attended Magnox's Annual Regional Review of (Leadership and Management for) Safety, Security and Environment on 19th September. We noted the continued good environmental performance at Oldbury over the past year.

Enforcement

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

Environmental Permitting

We have granted an application by Oldbury to remove the old reactor contamination vent system outlets from their permit, as these are no longer in use. There is no change to the site discharge or radiological impact. The varied permit was effective from 1st October 2018.

Intermediate Level radioactive Waste (ILW) Strategy

We work together with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) to advise Magnox on regulatory issues of mutual interest. 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 the site. We receive updates from Magnox on their revised radioactive waste strategy through a regional ILW meeting, which we attended on 15th October. We find this engagement useful, but raised no concerns over current progress and strategy.

Discharge Reports

Nuclear sites are required to routinely report to us their liquid and gaseous radioactive waste 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.

Gaseous and aqueous discharges for the period May to August 2018 remained well below the relevant annual discharge limits, and no Quarterly Notification Levels (QNL) were exceeded. Review of the returns identified no specific result or trends of concern, with monthly fluctuations as expected from plant operation.

Environmental Monitoring

We carry out sampling and analysis under our independent environmental monitoring programme, in association with the Food Standards Agency. The results of this work are published in our annual Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report. Berkeley and Oldbury sites are considered together for the purposes of environmental monitoring because the effects from both sites contribute to the same area.

The monitoring data for the calendar year 2016 was published in RIFE report 22 (RIFE 22) in October 2017, found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/science/research/radiologicalresearch/radiosurv/rife>.

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

Data for the calendar year 2017 is anticipated to be published in October 2018.

In parallel to this programme, Magnox is required to carry out its own programme of environmental monitoring and to submit the results of this programme to us on a periodic basis. We received notification from Magnox in October that slightly elevated levels of potassium-40 was detected at one of their sampling sites. This is not thought to be related to operations at Oldbury site.

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

The Environment Agency's Lead Regulator for Oldbury Site is Alex Lord, based in the Environment Agency's 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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