



# Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) Site Report for Harwell

Report for period 1 January – 30 June 2021

## Foreword

This report is issued as part of ONR's commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the above site available to the public. Reports are distributed quarterly to members for the Harwell Site Stakeholder Group and are also available on the ONR website (<http://www.onr.org.uk/lrc/>).

Site inspectors from ONR usually attend the Harwell Site Stakeholder Group meetings and will respond to any questions raised there. Any person wishing to inquire about matters covered by this report should contact ONR.

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## 1 INSPECTIONS

### 1.1 Dates of inspection

The ONR site inspector made inspections on the following dates during the reporting period:

- 1 and 3 March 2021
- 11 May 2021

Remote interactions were held with site to provide assurance that the site continued to maintain its safety, emergency and security arrangements.

## 2 ROUTINE MATTERS

### 2.1 Inspections

Inspections are undertaken as part of the process for monitoring compliance with:

- the conditions attached by ONR to the nuclear site licence granted under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (NIA65) (as amended);
- the Energy Act 2013 (TEA13);
- the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA74); and
- regulations made under HSWA74, for example the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR99).

The inspections entail monitoring licensee's actions on the site in relation to incidents, operations, maintenance, projects, modifications, safety case changes and any other matters that may affect safety. The licensee is required to make and implement adequate arrangements under the conditions attached to the licence to ensure legal compliance. During inspections, the inspector seeks to judge the adequacy of these arrangements and their implementation.

In this period, routine inspections of Harwell focused on the following license conditions:

- LC7 Incidents on site
- LC8 Warning Notices
- LC9 Instructions to persons on site
- LC14 Safety Documentation
- LC15 Periodic Review
- LC35 Decommissioning

ONR generally judged the site arrangements in response to safety requirements to be adequate in the areas inspected. Where improvements were identified, the licensee made satisfactory commitments to address those issues and the site inspector will closely monitor progress during future site inspections. Where necessary, ONR will take formal regulatory enforcement action to ensure that appropriate remedial measures are implemented to reasonably practicable timescales. Members of the public, who would like further information on ONR's inspection activities during the

reporting period, can view site Intervention Reports at [www.onr.org.uk/intervention-records](http://www.onr.org.uk/intervention-records) on our website [www.onr.org.uk](http://www.onr.org.uk). Should you have any queries regarding our inspection activities, please email [contact@onr.gov.uk](mailto:contact@onr.gov.uk).

## 2.2 Other work

Throughout this reporting period, including the period of national lockdown, the site safety inspector held regular telephone meetings with the ML Harwell leadership team representatives to maintain situational awareness of matters related to nuclear safety. No significant issues were highlighted to ONR.

ONR continues to monitor the implementation of COVID-19 arrangements on site. In the opinion of the site inspector this was in accordance with government guidance and Magnox Ltd's own arrangements for reducing the risk from COVID-19 to as low as reasonably practicable; and adequate arrangements are in place to safely re-pause operations in the event a further COVID-19 peak should necessitate it.

ONR engaged with the duty holder on its emergency arrangements and preparations for the regulator evaluated demonstration exercise later in 2021. ML Harwell training exercises have been witnessed and constructive feedback provided.

The ONR project inspector for the Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant delicensing project continues to meet remotely with the project staff at Harwell, supported by ONR specialist inspectors and Public Health England.

## 3 NON-ROUTINE MATTERS

Licensees are required to have arrangements to respond to non-routine matters and incidents. ONR inspectors judge the adequacy of the licensee's response, including actions taken to implement any necessary improvements.

There were no such matters of significance to report during the period.

## 4 REGULATORY ACTIVITY

ONR may issue formal documents to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Under nuclear site licence conditions, ONR issues regulatory documents which either permit an activity or require some form of action to be taken; these are collectively termed 'Licence Instruments' (LI) but can take other forms. In addition, inspectors may issue Enforcement Notices to secure improvements to safety.

No LI or Enforcement Notices were issued during the period.

Reports detailing the above regulatory decisions can be found on the ONR website at <http://www.onr.org.uk/pars/>.

## 5 NEWS FROM ONR

### Covid-19 (Coronavirus) (ONR position)

We are continuing to obtain assurance that nuclear site licensees and other dutyholders are adequately resourced to continue to safely and securely carry out their activities. We remain satisfied with industry's response at this time and there has been no significant change to dutyholders' safety and security resilience.

All licensed sites are required to determine minimum staffing levels necessary to ensure safe and secure operations and contingency arrangements in the event that these levels are not met. This condition is specifically designed to ensure that industry can adequately manage and control activities that could impact on nuclear safety and security under all foreseeable circumstances, including pandemics.

Although ONR staff continue to work primarily at home, (carrying out as much of our work as possible via videoconference, phone and email), we are carefully and progressively increasing our site footprint. We continue to assess our on-site presence in line with government guidelines and our business needs, ensuring we have a balanced portfolio of on-site inspections and interventions, that are important to support effective regulation across our purposes.

Our latest position can be found on our [website](#).

### Enforcement Action

- In January 2021, we agreed to extend two [Improvement Notices](#) served on the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), recognising the good progress made so far. The Notices, which were served in June 2019, relate to the way the company controls changes to organisational structure and resources which may affect safety.
- In January 2021, we served an [Improvement Notice](#) on Sellafield Ltd following a number of electrical safety incidents across the site. While we are satisfied that Sellafield Ltd is currently meeting the high standards expected with regards to nuclear safety, as a regulator we require sustained improvements in the area of electrical safety.
- In February 2021, we served an [Improvement Notice](#) on Morgan Sindall Construction and Infrastructure Ltd after workers came close to striking a live high voltage electric cable during excavation work at the Sellafield site. Nobody was harmed in the incident on 7 October 2020, and there was no impact on the public or the environment. However, the incident posed a serious risk to workers who were operating within one metre of the 11kV cable.
- In April, we announced that EDF [complied](#) with a Direction we served on 14 December 2020, under the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations (2000). This followed an inspection, at which found a number of pressure system components at Heysham 1 Power Station were overdue their scheduled examination.
- In May, we agreed to [extend an improvement notice](#) served on EDF in September 2020, recognising the progress made so far. The notice was served

after some of the equipment used to measure reactor power at Heysham 2 was incorrectly configured. We judged that Heysham 2 is able to operate safely, and that additional time to demonstrate the required improvements will not pose a risk to safety. EDF must now comply with the improvement notice by 31 July 2021.

- In June, we announced that Rolls-Royce Submarines Ltd (RRSL) had [complied](#) with an improvement notice served on 29 May 2020. The notice was served after RRSL operators brought 21 units of fissile material into the facility – which exceeding the limit defined within the safety case and set out in the Criticality Control Certificate for the facility.

## Changes to ONR leadership structure

- In February 2021, we provided an update about the leadership structural changes we initially announced in December 2020. Under existing contractual arrangements, current Chief Executive Adrienne Kelbie CBE was always expected to step down as her extended term of office comes to an end in January 2022. Current Chief Nuclear Inspector Mark Foy will step into the new combined role on 1 June 2021, when the new leadership structure will come into full effect.
- In February 2021, we announced that we had appointed Donald Urquhart to the newly-created role of Executive Director of Operations, which will form part of our new leadership structure. As Executive Director of Operations, Donald will be responsible for leading our regulatory work.
- In March 2021, we announced that as part of our new leadership arrangements, we had appointed three new deputy chief nuclear inspectors (DCIs) to our regulatory and senior leadership teams: Jane Bowie, Paul Dicks and Steve Vinton, currently all senior superintending inspectors at ONR. All three new DCIs have a strong track record of delivering regulation across the organisation, and will help us maintain a focus on our Strategy 2020-25

## Stakeholder Engagement

- In February 2021, we encouraged interested parties to take part in a Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) survey about building and maintaining trust between nuclear safety regulators and the stakeholders they engage with.
- In April, we published an [article](#) introducing our newest board member, Jean Llewellyn, who joined us in October 2021, as security lead. Jean brings with her a wealth of experience, including serving as a non-executive director on the board of the World Institute for Nuclear Security since 2018 – which has given her a good understating of the global security challenges facing the nuclear industry.
- In May, we issued our e-bulletin '[ONR News](#)' to subscribers. This issue included farewell reflections from our outgoing chief executive, a leadership update, further information on our COVID -19 response, and the results of our latest stakeholder survey. You can sign up for our e-bulletin [here](#)
- On 1 June, we [announced](#) the full implementation of our new leadership structure. Mark Foy is now our combined Chief Executive and Chief Nuclear

Inspector. He is supported by Sarah High as Deputy Chief Executive, and Donald Urquhart as Executive Director of Operations.

- In June, we published our new [Corporate Plan for 2021/22](#), which sets out our key priorities to protect the public by securing safe nuclear operations.
- In June, our State System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material (SSAC) project - which saw ONR become the UK's national nuclear safeguards regulator from 31 December 2020, was [shortlisted for a national award](#) in the Project Management Institute's UK National Project Awards in the 'Project of the Year (Public Sector)' category. Nuclear safeguards are measures to verify that countries comply with international obligations not to use nuclear materials from civil nuclear programmes for non-peaceful purposes.

All our latest news is available on our website [www.onr.org.uk](http://www.onr.org.uk)

## 6 CONTACTS

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