



November 2021

Dungeness Site Stakeholder Group – EDF report



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Station Director's Message – November 2021

When the SSG last met in June we discussed EDF's decision to move the station into its defueling phase. Since this decision was made we have begun to prepare a safety case for the Office for Nuclear Regulation, in addition to ensuring our plant and our people are ready for the work we will be carrying out over the coming years.

Senior members of the EDF generation executive team visited us in early autumn to see for themselves just how much progress we have made. Their feedback demonstrated that, even in a very short time, we had come a long way. I am sure that this positive approach will continue to guide us onsite.

Coronavirus

Over the past months we have continued to be vigilant to the risks of coronavirus. We continue to encourage social distancing and mask wearing on those occasions where distancing cannot be maintained. Our careful approach has meant we have avoided any significant impacts on day-to-day operations.

We continue to take advice from company medical professionals, and colleagues at other stations, on measures proportionate to the risk seen in local areas.

Defueling

Since our announcement in June Team Dungeness has been undertaking a range of activities to get us ready for the formal starting of defueling.

One of the biggest jobs we have had to tackle is changing our internal structures to reflect our new focus, defueling rather than generating, and that work is well underway.

Moving towards defueling brings with it a number of immediate practical considerations.

The most obvious is that the station no longer needed new fuel supplies. So, in July we started work to return the unused nuclear fuel to our supplier Springfields. In all there were 14 shipments. Returning the fuel was essential as it allowed Springfields to reuse fuel pins with the commonly used enrichment levels for the other EDF AGR stations. The last nine fuel boxes, comprising of 63 fuel elements, departed from Dungeness B on Thursday 16 September, leaving the fuel store empty of nuclear fuel.



Image: Last fuel shipment leaving Dungeness B power station

Our preparations have also attracted considerable internal and key stakeholder interest. The senior EDF Generation decommissioning team came on a plant visit in October and were particularly interested in our fuel route defueling preparations. Weeks later we were also visited by four trustees of The Nuclear Liabilities Fund (NLF). The NLF is governed by a board of trustees who hold and invest the funds needed to meet the decommissioning liabilities of the UK's nuclear power plants. The feedback from the visitors was that they were very impressed with our people and our culture, and the amount of progress that we have made as a station in such a short time. But perhaps most importantly of all, work to get our defueling safety case approved has taken a major step forward after an early draft of the work was presented to EDF's internal Nuclear Safety Committee. This is a really important first step on our journey to defueling and has been completed ahead of schedule.

Another one of the changes coming into effect as a consequence of our move towards defueling is changes to our emergency arrangements.

As discussed at the special SSG meeting held in September, those in a specified area previously received Potassium Iodate tablets to be taken in the event of an offsite nuclear emergency. These tablets protect those who take them against one short-lived radionuclide created in generating nuclear reactors. Because Dungeness B has not generated power for three years, and because it has now gone into the defueling phase, it was agreed with Kent County Council, as owner of the offsite emergency plan and arrangements at Dungeness, that there was no further need for the tablets to be distributed. As a consequence no new tablets will be issued and existing stocks should be returned. Those affected by these changes may have, or will be about to receive, letters from the council explaining the situation and what they now need to do.

Eureka Park

During 2021 and as part of our plan to improve site facilities and buildings we can now confirm that we have also relocated a number of staff to Eureka Park in Ashford. This facility gives us high quality office space in which to base a number of our key staff who are not required to be constantly based at Dungeness B. Our Ashford office is aiming to be paperless, whilst looking at providing technological alternatives like digital white boards and electronic notebooks. The future will also bring more electric vehicle charge points reducing the carbon footprint of the site and support EDF's vision of – Helping Britain achieve Net Zero.



Image: Sustainable office based @ Eureka Park, Ashford

Beach feeding

As you know the motion of the sea around Dungeness Point proves a challenge to maintaining sufficient levels of shingle on the sea facing side of the station every year. Our annual beach feeding programme exists to replenish levels of shingle piled between the station and the sea. This year's programme to restock the shingle will restart later this month. The programme will see us move approximately two thirds of the volume of shingle we moved last year and we expect the work to take around 19 weeks. We recently held a meeting with the Dungeness Residents Association to discuss this year's programme and further communications will be issued to the Estate in due course.

Environmental events

Since the last report to the SSG in June 2021 there have been no environmental events to report.

Safety

We measure our safety performance against industry top tier indicators, including nuclear reportable events, environmental events and staff and contract-partner recordable injuries. In mid-October the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) served a formal 'direction' to Dungeness B requiring the site to reassess safety arrangements due to an event involving management of chemistry within the site's boilers earlier in the year.

The event occurred while components were being tested in one of the reactors.

Although the reactors were safely shutdown at the time, there was a failure to control the quality of feedwater in the boiler tubes at the plant.

Boiler tubes play a key role turning water into steam to generate electrical power and the quality of feedwater is tightly controlled to protect these steel components. This is done by purifying the water and adjusting its qualities by carefully adding chemicals in small amounts.

On this occasion, the failure to properly control the feedwater quality caused minor damage within the boiler tubes. However, tests show they are still within the required safety limits.

EDF alerted ONR to the event and the ONR concluded that the event posed no nuclear safety risk to workers or the public. The site must demonstrate a detailed schedule of improvement plans and actions to ONR by December.

Earlier this month Dungeness B held its Annual Review of Safety (ARoS) with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), the Environment Agency (EA) and our own Independent Nuclear Assurance (INA) team.

The purpose of this review is to provide an update on the station's safety performance during the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, summarising strengths and detailing future improvements.

The review was a hugely positive interaction with our regulatory stakeholders, who recognised the way in which we have not only sustained, but continued to improve, our safety performance and management of the plant. The key theme coming out of the

discussions was that our performance improvement programme Professional To The Core has inspired significant improvements.

Community relations

Earlier this month, and as part of wider pieces on the future of nuclear power in Kent Dungeness B welcomed BBC South East Today and BBC Radio Kent onto site. Both outlets subsequently ran stories reflecting on Dungeness B's many achievements and considering what part the area could play in any UK nuclear future.

Also earlier this month the second Lydd 10K was held. Supported by the team at Dungeness B the event helped raise funds for our corporate charity partner Prostate Cancer UK.

On the day more than 190 from across Kent and beyond completed a specially designed course around Lydd and the surrounding villages and helped raise vital funds for the charity.

Our congratulations also go to Paul Windle, the site's Technical & Safety Support Manager, and Rob Starbuck, Environmental Safety Group Head, after the pair completed a rowing machine marathon each to raise funds for our company charity, Prostate Cancer UK. They both completed the challenge in under four hours. To sponsor Paul & Rob, and I'd encourage you all to do so, please visit;

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Team/Dungenessdryowers>



John Benn

Station Director

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