



Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) Quarterly Site Report for AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield

Report for period 1 April to 30 June 2015

Foreword

This report is issued as part of ONR's commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the Aldermaston and Burghfield sites available to the public. Reports are distributed quarterly to members for the Local Liaison Committee and are also available on the ONR website (<http://www.onr.org.uk/lc/>).

Site inspectors from ONR usually attend Aldermaston and Burghfield Local Liaison Committee meetings and will respond to any questions raised there. Any person wishing to inquire about matters covered by this report should contact ONR.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INSPECTIONS	3
2	ROUTINE MATTERS	3
3	NON-ROUTINE MATTERS	4
4	REGULATORY ACTIVITY	4
5	CONTACTS	5

1 INSPECTIONS

1.1 Dates of inspection

The ONR inspectors carried out inspections on the following dates during the quarter:

- April 20-23, 27-30
- May 11-14, 20,27
- June 2,15-18, 29-30

2 ROUTINE MATTERS

2.1 Inspections at Aldermaston and Burghfield

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;
- the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA74); and
- regulations made under HSWA74, for example the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999 (IRR99) 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 in order to ensure legal compliance. Inspectors seek to judge both the adequacy of these arrangements and their implementation.

In this period, routine inspections of Aldermaston and Burghfield covered the following:

- operating rules and instructions;
- safety mechanisms, devices and circuits;
- examination, maintenance, inspection and testing;
- staff training;
- new plant construction;
- radioactive leak detection;
- accumulation of waste;
- incident reporting;
- management systems.

In general, ONR judged the arrangements made and implemented by the site in response to safety requirements to be adequate in the areas inspected. However, where improvements were considered necessary, the licensee made satisfactory commitments to address the issues, and the inspectors will monitor progress during future visits. Where necessary, ONR will take formal regulatory enforcement action to ensure that appropriate remedial measures are implemented to reasonably practicable timescales.

Higher Activity Waste

ONR has served an Improvement Notice on the AWE for failing to demonstrate that its long-term strategy for managing Higher Active radioactive Waste reduces the future risk to the public and employees so far as reasonably practicable. The Improvement Notice is a key step

in a programme aimed at securing hazard reduction of all AWE's Higher Active radioactive Waste, and follows AWE's failure to comply with a Licence Instrument requiring the reduction in volume and encapsulation of 1,000 drums of radioactive waste by 20 February 2014.

This enforcement action relates to the long-term management of Higher Active radioactive Waste. ONR is satisfied that the current conditions under which the waste is stored are acceptable and do not give rise to significant risk to the public or the workforce. However, ONR considers that AWE has contravened the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 by failing to demonstrate that its long-term strategy for managing Higher Active radioactive Waste reduces the future risk to the public and employees so far as reasonably practicable throughout the anticipated storage life of the waste at Aldermaston. The Improvement Notice requires AWE to recommend options to ONR by 30 September 2016 for how it will manage all Higher Active radioactive Waste in a way that closes this compliance gap.

2.2 Other work

The ONR nominated site inspector for the AWE licensed sites attended the planned meeting of the local liaison committee on the 10 June.

3 NON-ROUTINE MATTERS

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

ONR investigated a reportable event in a decommissioning facility, following which decommissioning operations in that facility had been suspended by AWE. ONR has now concluded its investigation and is content that AWE has adequately learned from the event such that the risk of a recurrence will be minimised.

ONR is following up two reportable events in a legacy production facility, which relate to safety case shortfalls.

4 REGULATORY ACTIVITY

ONR inspectors 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 usually collectively termed 'licence instruments' (LIs), but can take other forms. In addition, inspectors may issue enforcement notices to secure improvements to safety.

- AWE Aldermaston Site Licence 77
 - LI529 and LI530 – Agreement to and approval of amendments to decommissioning arrangements
 - LI531 – Permission to undertake assay of coolant tank
- AWE Burghfield Site Licence 78A
 - LI531 – Agreement to modification to MENSA stack design

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

5 CONTACTS

Office for Nuclear Regulation

Redgrave Court

Merton Road

Bootle

Merseyside

L20 7HS

website: www.onr.org.uk

email: ONREnquiries@onr.gsi.gov.uk

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