

UKAEA, Windscale Report to the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group
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Date: April 2006

This report covers the period from 1st October 2005 – 31st March 2006

Operational Performance

Windscale Site

The Periodic Safety Review (PSR) for Windscale was completed and submitted to the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) in January. This is currently under review by the Regulator.

Piles Project

A report has been completed of the detailed findings resulting from the intrusive surveys of the non fire affected zone in Pile 1. The intrusive surveys are the first to be carried out since the fire in 1957 and have enabled the team to view the condition of the non fire affected zone of the core.

The Pile 1 Operational Safety Case was completed in October and sent to the NII for approval. The specification for the Decommissioning Safety Case (DSC) has also been completed.

The Pile 1 specification for the Fuel and Isotope removal equipment has been completed and approved by the project.

The Low Level Waste (LLW) route from the Piles to the Waste Management and Compaction (WAMAC) plant has been reopened and consignments have been sent.

As part of the Windscale waste management strategy, a number of storage drums have been moved from Pile 2 to the site drum store.

WAGR & Balance of Site Structures

Work on the size reduction of the Pressure Vessel in the WAGR facility ceased in December 2005 in order to address regulator concerns with regards to the flame torch cutting and the excessive use of filters. The cutting of the Pressure Vessel and Insulation has now been restarted for sampling purposes and an investigation is being undertaken.

The decommissioning of the Shielded Examination facility, linked to the WAGR facility is progressing well. The mortuary cave equipment has been removed and a jammed plug in Stringer Breakdown Cave 2 (SBC2) has also been removed. Both projects have been completed safely ahead of schedule, resulting in efficiency and cost savings.

Leased Operations Facilities

Following the improvement notice which was reported at the last meeting of the WCSSG, UKAEA have progressed with work to close out the notice. UKAEA Windscale has addressed all issues required to enable close out of the improvement notice within the timescale agreed with the NII.

The Justification for Continued Operations document for the redundant shielded facility has been approved by the Safety Working Party (SWP) and the NII. This allows 18 months for the completion of the plant Decommissioning Safety Case (DSC).

Clean-up Progress

The following buildings on the Windscale site have been demolished;

- B25
Occupants of the B25 building were relocated to alternative accommodation on the Windscale site to allow the demolition of B25. The cleared area will be used by British Nuclear Group as a construction lay-down area to facilitate the construction of the Sludge Treatment Plant on the Sellafield Site.
In accordance with best practice and UKAEA processes, sampling and characterisation of B25 was carried out prior to demolition, the majority of the waste was classified as “exempt” waste and therefore could be disposed of via a licensed landfill site as opposed to the Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg. The “Exempt” classification also allows the reuse of materials where applicable. The process of building sampling and characterisation is being promoted UKAEA wide and is being adopted elsewhere in the industry.
- F213
This redundant building, which previously housed the Calder Switch room, was demolished. New office accommodation is in the process of being constructed to assist with the relocation of staff previously housed in B25.
- B56.1
This redundant building was demolished as part of the B52 facility decommissioning programme in preparation for final demolition of the WAGR reactor buildings.
- B13 Sump House
The main structure had suffered weather damage and after alternative pumping arrangements were made for the low active water from the Post Irradiation Examination (PIE) Facility, demolition was undertaken and successfully completed.

Safety & Security

There was one lost time accident at Windscale during the reporting period and this ended a run of over 200 days since the last lost time accident (LTA). This LTA was reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) and was classed as an event. This was duly investigated and recommendations were made and initiated.

Windscale continues to strive for continuous improvement in the management of safety and security on the site.

A new Radioactive Substances Act 93 (RSA93) authorisation was introduced to the Windscale Site in January 2006. This new authorisation replaces four previous authorisations which have now been cancelled.

Highlights

Windscale had brought forward £1.7 million of additional work into the Windscale programme for 2005/2006. This is in accordance with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's (NDA) guidelines for acceleration wherever it is safe to do so.

Windscale hosted a stakeholder workshop in March in order to consult on the Integrated Waste Strategy for the Windscale Site. The workshop was well attended and gave the Integrated Waste Strategy (IWS) team the opportunity to consult with a wide range of stakeholders on future strategy.

The Windscale Socio Economic Plan has been submitted to the NDA on schedule and to programme. Windscale consulted with staff and external stakeholders on the plan and views were incorporated prior to submission to the NDA. Windscale will continue to consult with stakeholders during 2006/2007. The Windscale Lifetime Plan has also been submitted to the NDA recently on schedule and to programme.

Employment Trends

UKAEA are currently undergoing a recruitment campaign. Positions have been advertised in both the local and national press.

Forward Programme

Discussions are ongoing with the NDA regarding funding for the safety improvement programme and engineering work in support of the safety case in the Leased Operations Facility.

The evaluation of the Piles Project acceleration proposals are currently being carried out by UKAEA prior to submission to the NDA.

From 31st March 06, the contract with Project Services Limited for the work which is being undertaken on the WAGR facility, will be replaced by direct funding of the UKAEA programme by the NDA.

Stakeholder Issues

The members of the Windscale Sub-committee of the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group met at Windscale recently, to participate in a Stakeholder Group Workshop and a familiarisation tour of the site.

The Windscale Team value the opinions and views of our stakeholders. The workshop gave everyone the opportunity to share their views. The output of the workshop enabled us to determine the basis for the agenda for Site Stakeholder engagement in 2006.

The second formal meeting of the Windscale Sub-Committee of the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group was held on 7th March 2006.

Members of the Windscale Team have supported a range of stakeholder events during the reporting period including the Cumbria County Council Seminar held in Kendal in March.

UKAEA Windscale has sponsored a series of seminars: “The Next Generation – Nuclear Talks 2005-2006”. These events have been held in association with Westlakes Research Institute and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN).

Environmental Volunteering

In October, staff from Windscale joined with staff and volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) to undertake two projects in West Cumbria.

Staff returned to Clints Quarry in Egremont, a disused limestone quarry with grassland, scrub, woodland and ponds. The site is of interest for industrial archaeology and is often visited by schools for nature projects.

Volunteers helped to clear scrub that was encroaching on the limestone grassland and they also helped to maintain the footpath network.

The second project took place at Eskdale’s Christcliffe Nature Reserve. Christcliffe is part of small basin mire, half of which is wooded and half typical mire vegetation. The willows are thought to have been planted and used for basket making in the 19th century. The work at Christcliffe consisted of repairing dry stone walls, maintaining the path network, felling encroaching willow and clearing the mire area of bramble as well as erecting bird boxes.

Staff enjoyed the opportunity to learn new skills as well as helping maintain important local natural environments.

UKAEA has actively continued its association and support of The Hodbarrow Lighthouse Regeneration Project.

Site Visit

During the October WCSSG Scrutiny meeting, the Chairman invited members of the group to visit Windscale. Uptake for the visit was minimal, however the invitation remains and any member of the WCSSG who wishes to visit the Windscale Site should contact the Secretariat of the Windscale Sub-committee.

UKAEA Update

UKAEA Alliance with AMEC plc and CH2M Hill

The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA), AMEC plc and CH2M HILL recently formed an important new alliance to target opportunities in the UK's £56 billion (£2bn a year) nuclear clean up market. UKAEA believes the alliance heralds the start of an open and competitive market in UK civil nuclear decommissioning and responds to the government's landmark decision to open this market to competition.

The alliance will initially target sites among the UK's 20 civil nuclear sites which are now being opened to competition by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). Around half of these are expected to be bid by the end of 2008. Beyond this market, the partners will explore further national and international opportunities such as the multi-billion pound market in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, building on the alliance partners' experience in these regions.

The move will enable UKAEA, a public sector company that has historically led a significant share of the UK's nuclear clean-up work, to compete on a new and stronger basis in this evolving market.

Index of Acronyms

NII	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
DSC	Decommissioning Safety Case
LLW	Low Level Waste
WAMAC	Waste Management and Compaction
IOSC	Interim Operational Safety Case
OSC	Operational Safety Case
SBC2	Stringer Breakdown Cave
LTA	Lost time Accident
RSA93	Radioactive Substances Act 93
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
IWS	Integrated Waste Strategy
NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
UCLAN	University of Central Lancashire
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers