

Radioactive Substances Act 1993: Variations to allow treatment of low level radioactive waste

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Proposals

- LLWR wish to establish services to encourage segregation of wastes to:
 - Minimise waste volumes (thermal treatment, metals)
 - Recover useful materials (metals)
 - Minimise disposal costs (VLLW)
 - Maximise use of LLWR capacity
- In the short term LLWR propose wastes will be transferred via LLWR for treatment elsewhere
- In the longer term LLWR aim to establish routes direct from consignors to treatment facilities
- Some other nuclear sites wish to establish routes direct to treatment facilities (e.g. Metals Recycle Facility, Lillyhall)

Variations

- We expect LLWR to apply for a variation to allow transfer of wastes to different facilities for treatment
- We expect certain other nuclear sites to apply for variations to allow transfer of wastes to new facilities (e.g. Metals Recycle Facility, Lillyhall) for treatment
- Nuclear site authorisations only currently allow transfer of waste to LLWR for the purposes of final disposal
- We propose to vary all nuclear site authorisations, where LLW is currently consigned to LLWR, to allow onward transfer for treatment, with radioactive waste residues being returned to the LLWR.

Process and requirements

- Any application to transfer wastes to an alternative site for treatment will need to be supported by a BPEO case. We will consider any application and consult in accordance with our guidelines
- We propose to take action ourselves to vary nuclear site authorisations to allow wastes transferred to the LLWR to be onward transferred to other sites for treatment. We will undertake statutory consultation

Why are we doing this?

- We are obliged to consider any application for a variation
- We wish to support the treatment of wastes in line with the waste management hierarchy where it is safe to do so and it represents the BPEO
- We wish to support early moves by consignors, the LLWR and suppliers of treatment options to establish segregation and treatment routes
- Establishes transparent legal instruments

When is this happening

- We expect an application from the LLWR to allow transfers for treatment this autumn
- We expect other nuclear site operators to apply for transfers to the Metals Recycle Facility, Lillyhall this autumn, or early in 2009
- Where relevant and if possible we hope to combine consultation on the above applications
- We propose to vary all nuclear site authorisations to allow onward transfer of materials from LLWR for treatment this autumn