

Report to the West Cumbria Site Stakeholder Group Emergency Planning Sub Committee on Emergency Exercises held on the UKAEA Windscale Site during the period September 2007 - March 2008

Introduction

Under the terms of its Nuclear Site Licence, UKAEA Windscale is required to stage an annual Level I Demonstration exercise to be witnessed by HM Nuclear Inspectorate. This report summarises the findings of Level I exercises held during the reporting period. UKAEA is also subject to the Nuclear Industry Security Regulations 2003 and is required to stage an annual counter terrorist (CT) security exercise to be witnessed by inspectors from OCNS. There have been no CT exercises during the reporting period.

Exercises Held

5 September 2007: Level I Exercise 'Corncrake'

This exercise postulated the catastrophic failure of the building crane during the transfer of a shielded Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) container in the Leased Operations Facility (LOF). The accident was assumed to cause injuries to 2 employees, breach a cave shield window and generate the release of significant levels of radiation and contamination within the facility operating area.

Key objectives for the exercise were:

- To demonstrate the application of Command & Control processes for the management of the emergency, including the prioritisation of response for several concurrent events
- To test the interaction of emergency teams (fire, ambulance, health physics etc) from different organisations attending the scene under the overall control of a UKAEA Incident Controller.
- The management of casualties, evacuees and other site personnel
- The preparation of effective recovery plans

In the subsequent debrief NII requested UKAEA Windscale to carry out the following improvements and/or review of procedures:

- improvements to the LOF Incident Control and Access Control facilities and, where necessary, other equivalent facilities on the Windscale site
- to account for the time taken to carry out a muster and recover casualties
- to examine the mechanisms for recovering information gathered by re-entry teams

Future Exercises

Dates for the Windscale site annual Level I and Counter-Terrorist exercises in 2008 have still to be agreed with NII and OCNS.

M R Richardson
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