



HM NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS INSPECTORATE

UKAEA WINDSCALE

WEST CUMBRIA SITES STAKEHOLDER GROUP

HALF-YEAR REPORT FOR WINDSCALE SUB-COMMITTEE 6th March 2006

FOREWORD

This report is issued as part of the Health and Safety Executive's commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the above site available to the public. It is for distribution to members of the Windscale sub-committee of the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group and covers activities associated with the regulation of safety at UKAEA Windscale. This report is compiled from HSE's normal reports for the second half of 2006 that are available on the Internet, and includes information for the early part of 2007.

1 B13

1.1 Improvement Notices

The two Improvement Notices that were served on UKAEA and Nexia Solutions for operations in B13 had a scheduled date for compliance of 30th November 2005, but were extended to 1st September 2006.

NII has monitored progress with both Notices and was able to close both Notices on the evidence provided.

1.2 Operational Safety Case

The safety case for B13 expired at the end of December 2006. UKAEA approached NII in September to discuss how the safety case could be kept extant given the late start in making safety improvements to the building. UKAEA prepared a modification to the new safety case and, having received advice from its Nuclear Safety

Committee, sent this to NII in mid December. The Nuclear Safety Committee also advised UKAEA that it could accept a one-month extension of the old safety case to allow time seeking NII agreement to the proposal. The proposal allows use of the new safety case, but restricts operations that are permitted until safety improvements are completed.

NII's has been concerned at the lack of progress with safety improvements over the two-year period since the new safety case was originally submitted to NII. NII has issued three Licence Instruments to allow work to proceed but to keep a tight regulatory oversight.

1. To agree that the 2004-2005 safety case can be adopted
2. To acknowledge the safety case modification that restricts permitted operations, and add an additional restriction on use of the 40Te crane.
3. To Specify that safety documents in thirteen topic areas be submitted to NII 28 days before implementation.

These areas are:

1. Operation of the 15Te crane other than for Cave 1 bulkhead lifts and Cave 1 antechamber operations.
2. Operation of the Active Machining Facility.
3. Horizontal Posting operations.
4. Vertical Posting operations.
5. Operation of the portable containment box.
6. Cave entries, but not including entries to the Cave 1 Flasking area and the Cave 13 Antechamber and lid lift cells.
7. Placing of additional loads on the cave roof.
8. Changes to limits, conditions, and operating regimes for criticality control
9. Resumption of operations with the South Annex 40te crane for lifting Nuclear Matter.
10. Resumption of operations requiring use of the shield door at Cave 1
11. Resumption of operations requiring use of the shield door at Cave 12
12. Resumption of operations requiring use of the shield door at Cave 13
13. Operations to receive and process Neutron Sources.

1.3 B13 Events.

One events was reported by UKAEA in early January. During maintenance of the Cave 12 transfer tunnel and shield doors the outer shield door opened unexpectedly before the inner door had fully closed. Further use of the transfer tunnel was embargoed by UKAEA, and, after advice from NII the following working day, the embargo was extended to the other shield doors in B13. Each of the embargoes will remain until the event is fully understood and a return to service can be justified.

1.4 Engineering Improvements.

I noted in the last report that funding, and responsibility for making the engineered improvements that are required as a result of the new safety case was transferred from Nexia Solutions to UKAEA following a meeting held in December 2005. Responsibility for operational maintenance remains with Nexia Solutions under the terms of their tenancy agreement with UKAEA.

UKAEA has now completed its plan for completing this work, and has had the detailed funding plan agreed through the NDA's process. This was an important factor for NII in agreeing the UKAEA proposal for the safety case that is discussed above.

Completion of the work will take many months; the final work should be finished in September 2009.

2 Piles Decommissioning Project

NII is monitoring progress with the planning work associated with total decommissioning of both reactors. Timing of work remains dependant on levels of funding.

As part of the on-going preparatory work, UKAEA has recently submitted a modern standards safety case to NII for Pile 2 and its associated building. UKAEA has identified a number of areas where work will be needed to approach current standards for the building and its cranes.

3 Emergency Exercises

There have been no observed exercises since the previous report.

4 Leases

4.1 Building B546.1 - NII has received an application for use of B546.1 by BNGSL demolition group for final sentencing of demolition wastes. As was reported last quarter, NII is treating this application in two parts to allow early occupation of the office accommodation. NII's work on this is almost completed; it is anticipated that the Licence Condition 3 Consent will be given early in the new year. Once UKAEA and BNGSL have finished the additional documentation to allow the waste sentencing a variation to the agreement will be processed.

4.2 New Change rooms - A meeting was held with UKAEA and BNGSL to discuss the possibility of building a new block for office accommodation and change rooms on the Windscale site that would service the Separation Area on the Sellafield site for BNGSL. NII was not satisfied with the proposal, particularly with the proposed arrangements for control of contamination. The meeting suggested an alternative that would allow office accommodation and a new canteen on the Windscale site, and the conversion of the existing offices and canteen to change room space.

5 Lifetime Plan

What used to be called Life Cycle Baseline and Near Term Work Plan is now called the Life Time Plan (LTP). The timescales for the work described above for B13 and the accelerated Piles decommissioning is now included in the LTP. The ability to deliver against the planned timescales will be dependant upon available funding.