

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
SEPA Report to the Dounreay Stakeholders' Group
March 2009

Pollution Prevention & Control (PPC)

DSRL has yet to submit an application to surrender the PPC permit regulating the recovery of uranium metal from uranium containing waste streams. However discussions have been ongoing about the level of detail required of the application, and it is hoped this will be submitted soon.

Radioactive Substances Act 1993 Authorisations

During the week beginning 23 February, SEPA and NII inspectors undertook a joint readiness inspection for the restart of the active commissioning programme for the Ion Exchange Plant (IXP), part of the Dounreay Fast Reactor (DFR) NaK Disposal Plant (NDP), following the leak of active liquor within the ion exchange plant. The outcome of the inspection is that SEPA and NII have agreed to the restart of active commissioning of the NaK Disposal Plant Ion Exchange Plant. It was agreed that a number of actions will have to be completed by DSRL before the facility transfers to full operations. SEPA and NII will undertake another joint inspection of NDP and IXP before the facility transfers to full operations.

SEPA continues to monitor the progress of the improvement conditions which were written into the authorisations which were transferred from UKAEA to DSRL.

Proposed new Low Level Radioactive Waste Facility

SEPA continues to work with DSRL on the provision of additional information as specified in the conditions attached to the planning permission.

The public consultation on the RSA 93 application - postponed until the Spring - is scheduled to start in late April or early May and will last for 12 weeks. The consultation will be based on the newly published "Near Surface Guidance on Requirements for Authorisation" and DSRL's application for authorisation, supported by the Environmental Safety Case 2009 which we expect to receive from DSRL in early April.

On 5th February SEPA met with DSRL to discuss the application process for the proposed Excavated Materials Storage Facility associated with the construction of the Low Level Waste Facilities. The storage of the excavated materials will be regulated by means of a PPC permit, in line with requirements set out in The Landfill (Scotland) Regulations 2003 and The Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2000. An application is expected from DSRL towards the later part of 2009 and will be subject to public consultation.

Please note that SEPA web pages have been redesigned to be simpler, more relevant and easier to use. We have tried to ensure all previously published links will work, however if there are any problems please let us know. The new link is:

http://www.sepa.org.uk/radioactive_substances/decommissioning/dounreay/proposed_llw_facilities.aspx

Site Drainage

SEPA are awaiting DSRL's review of site sewage treatment operations –this is expected to be available within a few weeks. SEPA have been given a presentation about the performance of the non-active drains and relevant systems, Milliscreens etc. There have been several unexplained excursions in BOD and especially COD at all the 6 outfalls, and SEPA will be seeking further information about these. We are considering reintroducing routine sampling of the outfalls if this is deemed safe after re-examination of the 6 Environmental Risk Assessments.

SEPA has asked to DSRL to consider an extension to its drainage discharge monitoring programme

Particles and Beach Monitoring

DSRL will be continuing with the offshore particle retrieval programme this year and for several years to come. SEPA and DSRL are considering arrangements for a successor to DPAG to provide advice to SEPA and DSRL on the particle retrieval programme and ongoing beach monitoring.

Planning

SEPA has received and responded to an EIA screening consultation from The Highland Council on the Dounreay Phase 2 Decommissioning and Restoration plans.

HMS Vulcan

Work over the last several years to produce a new letter of approval for the disposal of radioactive waste from Vulcan is nearly complete. The final version has been submitted to the Scottish Government as the last step in the process before the document is formally issued.