



Submarine Delivery Agency

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VULCAN NAVAL REACTOR TEST ESTABLISHMENT (NRTE) AUTHORISEE RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTION

1. At the DSG meeting on 13 March 2019, a member of the public (Mr A Glasgow) asked:

"whether there had been closure to the Vulcan boiler explosion as he had heard a similar incident elsewhere had resulted in serious injuries"

I responded that I did not believe that the incident at Vulcan was similar to the incident elsewhere, but I would investigate and report back to the DSG to answer his question.

2. Vulcan NRTE's permanent on-site heating system boilers suffered a failure on the 29 September 2017 and have been shut down since this date. The failure of the Vulcan NRTE site heating system boiler took place in an unmanned building and was due to an over-fuelling fault of the combustion chamber, leading to the failure. This was different to the incident which it is inferred, Mr Glasgow was referring to one occurring at Heysham 1 Nuclear power station in November 2018. The event at Heysham was caused by Condensate Induced Water Hammer in their boiler supplied steam system; the Vulcan NRTE site heating steam system has steam traps incorporated to prevent this type of incident.

3. To answer Mr Glasgow's question, the two events are significantly different. The Vulcan NRTE site permanent heating system boilers have not been operated since the event, awaiting the outcome of the failure investigation. The investigation has concluded and is now closed.

4. The permanent on site heating system boilers, (including the boiler involved in the event), are to be de-commissioned and removed from the site. A contract for new permanent on site heating boilers has been placed and will be installed on to the Vulcan NRTE site. The new heating boilers are more efficient than the type being removed and meet the current environmental requirements for new installations. The manufacturer and installer of the new site heating system boilers will be providing training to the operators to allow for safe operation. A manufacturer approved maintenance regime by the installer is also included in the new contract.

Cdr S Southwood RN
Site Authorisee