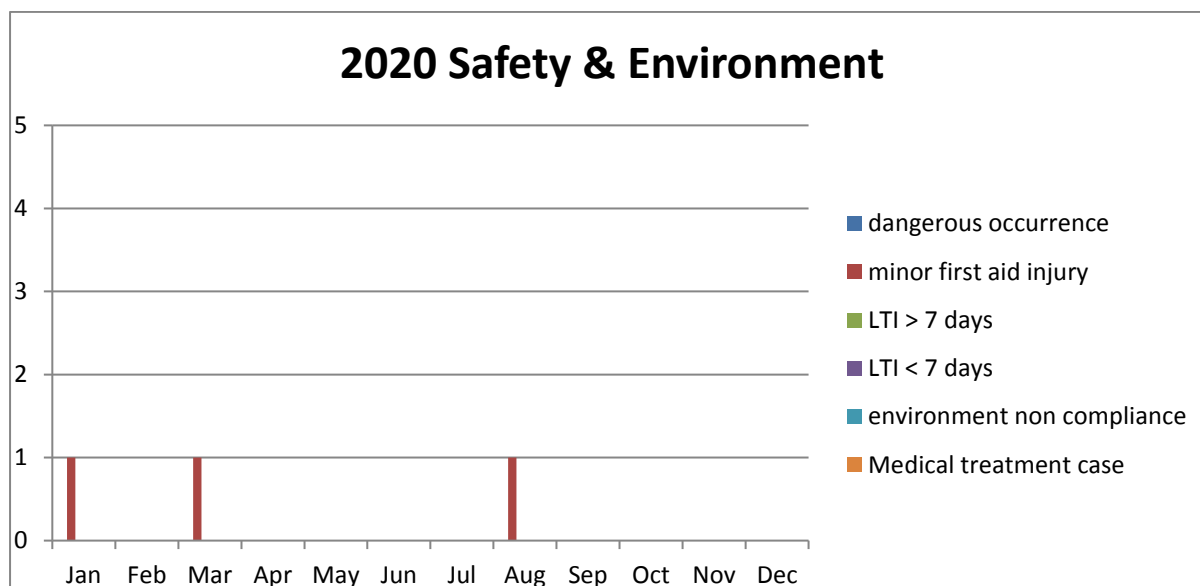


VULCAN NRTE Report to the DSG Sub Group – November 2020



Health and Safety/COVID-19

The Head of Establishment continues to direct the site policy on COVID-19 mitigations and working arrangements with independent oversight exercised by ONR. The stance adopted is to intelligently apply the most onerous guidelines and direction from either the Scottish or UK governments. Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA) processes demand that all personnel on site have a personal risk assessment, that includes their journey to work and their home circumstances such as extremely vulnerable household members, before they attend for work at the Vulcan site. If any suspected cases are reported, processes are in place to enable rapidly instigated safety mitigations such as deep cleaning, and their reporting to Public Health Scotland.

In compliance with Scottish Government mandate the wearing of face coverings in indoor communal workplaces, such as corridors and social spaces has been implemented on site. The Vulcan induction orientation has been updated to reflect the changes and communicated to personnel. Whilst disposable face coverings are being supplied as a short-term measure, SDA is in the process of procuring bulk supplies of washable and reusable face-coverings so that we can issue a number to each member of staff at the Vulcan site to minimise our environmental impact.

The HSE team continue to issue regular Health & Safety/COVID-19 briefings to all Vulcan personnel. A programme addressing both physical and mental health is being delivered throughout 2020, the health and wellbeing roadshow will be delivered as an online event. The SDA has also provided a series of Skype sessions on resilience and these have been well received throughout, this is in addition to the SDA's Employee Assistance Programme which also provides support to family members as well as the SDA employee.

Personnel took part in the SDA's Safety and Environment Day on 15 October where a number of varied online presentations were given from both internal MOD and external parties.

Since the previous update we have completed the phased return of the Rolls-Royce apprentices to site with appropriate work arrangements and COVID-19 safety measures in place.

Environment

There have been no challenges to the Approval of Arrangements (AoA) limits during this period. No SEPA inspections have been conducted during this period but weekly contact has been maintained by the MOD(V) team with SEPA throughout the period of COVID-19 restrictions to enable the early identification and discussion of any potential non-compliance issues.

Radioactive Waste Disposal

At the end of September 2020, the annual rolling discharge (expressed as a percentage against the maximum detailed in the SEPA letter of agreement) was:

	Type	Percentage
Gaseous	Noble Gases	0%
	Other radionuclides not specifically listed, taken together.	20.4%
Liquid	All other radionuclides not specifically listed, taken together.	0.18%
	Tritium	0.003%
Solid	Other Radionuclides	0%

Shore Test Facility Programme

Preparations to complete defuel of the STF reactor continue, with both classroom instruction and practical team training on a dedicated training rig. Final modifications to support defuel to the STF Pond are being progressed and supporting operational documentation is being produced. The defuel is subject to rigorous hold point control and external MOD assessment of the nominated teams.

Events

Since the last meeting no Events have occurred that required reporting to DNSR or ONR in accordance with their mandatory reporting criteria.

Emergency Arrangements

Vulcan remains REPIR19 compliant in all respects with the exception of the off-site plan which is with the Highland Council and is understood to be scheduled for approval later this month (November). As stated in my last routine brief, the challenge of rescheduling a number of delayed MOD exercises alongside similarly deferred exercises for civilian licenced nuclear sites was putting strain on both the regulatory and MOD exercise facilitator resources. The result of this has been that there will be no LONESTAR nuclear emergency response exercise this calendar year; the exercise is now being provisionally planned for May 2021. In lieu of this, there are a series of half-day response team tabletop exercises currently being undertaken using appropriate COVID social distancing and mitigations. Additionally, bespoke to Vulcan remotely delivered nuclear emergency response training was undertaken by all appropriate site personnel in July.

Similarly, the annual security exercise has been postponed due to COVID impacting on its staffing and assessment. It is yet to be rescheduled, but is unlikely to be held before Spring 2021.

Inspection / Audit Programme

Due to COVID safeguards, no on-site regulatory inspections have occurred since the last report. However, a remotely conducted DNSR AC18 Radiation Protection inspection took place in July and a combined Annual Review of Safety and Level 2 Regulatory Interface Forum took place on 19 August.

Vulcan Decommissioning Programme

We have been assessing the position in light of the ongoing COVID restrictions and this has identified some further operational activities that may be required post Dec 22. We have not yet determined the full scope of these and the way ahead is still under consideration.. This has resulted in the withdrawal of the Prior Information Notice (PIN) for the Vulcan Site Management and Decommissioning completeion published in March whilst we establish a clear way ahead. A new notice will be published on the Defence Contracts Bulletin in due course and the DSG will be informed in parallel. However, we remain committed to the decommissioning of the site to a programme that remains coherent with that of DSRL

Key Personnel Changes

Former Royal Navy staff member, Dean Bowman, has rejoined Vulcan in the important role of Site Liaison Officer providing the Nuclear Authorisee with Independent Nuclear Assurance outwith MOD or Rolls Royce line management.