

Devonport Local Liaison Committee Report

29 June 2020

January - July 2020

Introduction

This report covers our regulation at both Devonport Royal Dockyard Limited (DRDL) and HM Naval Base (HMNB) Devonport. The Environment Agency's lead nuclear regulator for both sites is Richard Lee; he is supported by the previous lead regulator, Gary McMeekan, who is now leading our regulation of Hinkley Point C.

Richard and Gary are both members of the Environment Agency's Southern Nuclear Regulation Group (NRG) which is based in Wallingford in Oxfordshire. The Environment Agency staff who regulate non-nuclear activities on the Devonport site are based in local offices.

Contact Details

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Attendance at site

We made visits to Devonport Royal Dockyard in accordance with our regulatory programme. However, in response to the coronavirus pandemic, we discontinued site-based regulatory activities from March 2020 at all nuclear sites (other than in exceptional circumstances). We have maintained regular contact with both DRDL and HMNB by telephone and e-mail in addition to formal correspondence. The Environment Agency receives reports from DRDL and HMNB on radioactive discharges and environmental monitoring, and these are placed on the public register.

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88

Current regulatory issues

Radioactive discharges and disposals

All routine radioactive discharges and disposals from the Devonport site remain well within the limits set by our Environmental Permit (DRDL) and Approval (HMNB).

Other regulatory regimes

In addition to nuclear regulation, the Environment Agency regulates both DRDL and HMNB under a number of regulatory regimes. We regulate:

- Non-radioactive emissions to air from combustion activities
- Non-radioactive discharges and emissions from certain chemical processes
- Non-radioactive discharges in general to the Hamoaze
- Storage, treatment, recovery and disposal of non-radioactive wastes
- Pollution prevention from routine dockyard operations

Compliance assessment

We carried out an inspection of the Naval Base Approval in February 2020. We were satisfied that arrangements on site were sufficient to meet the requirements of the Approval.

We carried out a remote audit of aspects of the arrangements that DRDL had put in place to ensure compliance with their permit during the response to the coronavirus pandemic. We were satisfied that their modified arrangements were suitable and we did not identify any non-compliances.

DRDL self-reported a non-compliance in April that related to events in February. The approved flowmeter used to measure discharges was taken out of service during an equipment upgrade. DRDL used alternative means to measurement the flows, without informing us in advance. We were satisfied that there was no environmental impact and that measures have been put in place to prevent a recurrence.

Permit variations

The Environment Agency is about to finalise and issue variations to DRDL's permit and HMNB's approval, that relate to the eventual decommissioning clean-up of the Devonport site, as explained in greater detail in our January 2020 report.

Other items of note

In light of the meeting being cancelled, we want to emphasise that we would be pleased to respond by email or phone to any questions raised by committee members or the public about our report.

Actions and points of clarification from previous meetings

None

Richard Lee

Lead Nuclear Regulator

Nuclear Regulation Group (South)

June 2020