

Minutes of the 37th AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting Monday 21st June 2004

Present:

Malcolm Hutchinson	Executive Chairman, AWE	Chairman LLC
Bill Haight	Managing Director, AWE	
Jonathan Brown	Director Infrastructure, AWE	
Angela Jenkins	Director Assurance, AWE	
Avril Burdett	Corporate Communications, AWE	Secretary LLC
Lindsey Appleton	Corporate Communications, AWE	
Malcolm Bryant	Wokingham Unitary Authority	
Bill Cane	Mortimer West End Parish Council	Community Liaison Rep.
Margaret Dadswell	Aldermaston Parish Council	
Maurice Eden	Holybrook Parish Council	
Phil Gowan	West Berkshire Council	
Peter Hobbs	Sulhamstead Parish Council	
David Leeks	Tadley Town Council	
Martin Maynard	Pangbourne Parish Council	
Jeff Moss	Swallowfield Parish Council	
Murray Roberts	Padworth Parish Council	
Alan Sumner	Wokefield Parish Council	
Tim Whitaker	Mapledurham Parish Council	

Observers:

Darren Baker Environment Agency

1. Apologies

John Mazillius has left the LLC; Cllr Roger Brown has been replaced by Cllr David Shirt (representing Aldermaston Parish Council). Cllr David Wood will be representing Theale Parish Council. Mr Phil Gowan represented West Berkshire Council.

Apologies from: Cllr Beard; Cllr Broad; Cllr Campbell; Cllr Charlesworth; Mr Eddy; Cllr Goss; Cllr Lochrie; Cllr Longton; Cllr Mundy; Cllr Neill; Mr Payne; Cllr Shirt; Mr Thomson; Cllr Waite; Cllr Ward; Cllr Williams; Cllr Wood.

Apologies also from AWE's NII Inspectors. They sent this statement:

NII Inspectors are in dispute with HSE over pay and are working to rule.

This requires us to be present at our HQ on Monday mornings. NII considers the LLC a key contact point with the local community to whom we are responsible. In normal circumstances we would have made every effort to be available at the meeting. Please note that in the event of emergency on site, we would abandon our work to rule and inspectors would respond normally.

2. Actions from the last Meeting

There were no actions from the last meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

4. Chairman's Remarks – Malcolm Hutchinson, Executive Chairman

The Chairman introduced Dr Angela Jenkins, AWE's new Assurance Director

Queen's Birthday Honours

Malcolm Jones was awarded an MBE in recognition of his outstanding contribution to nuclear safety and Peter Sankey was awarded an OBE for outstanding services to the defence industry.

Visit of Martin Salter MP

Martin Salter has asked to visit in the near future and AWE looks forward to hosting him.

Schools Liaison

AWE now has a selection of teaching kits on curriculum-based subjects such as magnetism, light and friction. The kits contain equipment, instructions for experiments aimed at various key stages, teaching guidelines and suggestions for projects. These kits are available for the 75 schools on the scheme to borrow, free of charge. This saves the schools money and helps teachers with science projects.

The annual schools prize for a major project was won this year by Bramley School, a local primary school. They won the £7000 they needed to build a nature and wildlife area as an outdoor classroom. The site, the size of a 5-a-side football pitch will have two ponds and a weather station and will be used to give the 330 children a better understanding of the world around them.

Transit of Venus

AWE's amateur astronomers set up telescopes to record the transit of Venus across the sun. The images were put onto the AWE website so that local schools could follow the event. The event was covered by local papers and Meridian TV.

RoSPA award

AWE has become the first to win the RoSPA sector award for safety four times in a row. This reflects the robust state of our safety management system. AWE Construction Management Department also won a Merit Award for outstanding safety performance.

CND demonstration Easter 2004

The demonstration passed off peacefully with a crowd of 550. There was no damage to AWE property and no arrests. However, following a separate incident, 6 protestors appeared in court on 7th June charged with causing criminal damage at Burghfield.

Trident Ploughshares demonstration

This anti nuclear group has announced their intention to hold a protest at AWE sites from the 2nd to the 9th of July. Ministry of Defence and Thames Valley Police will work together to minimise the impact of the protest, but there may be times when traffic flow around the sites is affected.

Apprentice School success in awards scheme

Sine the LLC's visit to the Apprentice School at the last meeting AWE's Apprentice Training Scheme won the top award in the Modern Apprenticeship Berkshire 2004 Awards. Daniel Fairbairn, one of our current apprentices also won the top award for the best young learner in a foundation modern apprenticeship. Daniel Bigglestone, finished as runner-up in the advanced modern apprenticeship category. This proves that AWE's modern apprentice training programme is second to none in providing people with a wealth of career opportunities and we were delighted to be recognised in this way.

2000th Pulse of Viper reactor

Viper, AWE's "Versatile Intermediate Pulsed Energy Reactor", celebrated its 2000th pulse earlier this year. Viper is AWE's only reactor and is little bigger than a dining room table. It is used as a research tool to provide a radiation environment and to examine the response of materials and equipment to that Radiation. It is one of only two pulsed reactors in the world and is able to reach a critical condition in a matter of milliseconds and can return to a sub critical state just as quickly. The facility is also used by universities on important research projects in the field of medicine, pharmaceuticals and reactor physics training.

It was originally commissioned 37 years ago and since 1967 has evolved to meet a whole new range of challenges. We use it to perform tests and experiments which help us to understand the ageing process of specific materials in the warhead, a key part in the safety and service ability of Trident.

Treacle Fair

This year a team from AWE put together a stand for the Tadley Treacle Fair. It covered environmental matters, conservation and AWE Aldermaston's role as an American airbase during the Second World War and specifically its involvement in the D-Day landings. The stand proved very popular, especially the historical section.

LLC members congratulated AWE on the Honours received by staff, the Apprentice awards and the RoSPA awards. David Leeks commended AWE for putting in dropped kerbs to assist wheelchair users.

5. Health, Safety and Environmental Issues – Dr Angela Jenkins, Director Assurance

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Company Total Injury Events is under management and the trend is downwards, but still not as low as we would wish it to be. Staff events are mostly either caused through manual handling resulting in hand or finger injuries or slips, trips and falls. They tend not to relate to our core operational activities. The same is true for the contractor injuries mostly hand and finger and MDP events were principally slips, trips and falls. Seven of the injuries to AWE staff were lost time accidents, five of which were slips trips and falls and two were manual handling incidents.

Maximum Individual Dose. The Company Annual target is 2.8mSv. The March result of 1.47mSv is currently being investigated and you will be updated at the next meeting.

Collective Dose is on target at 250 man mSv. for the rolling 12 month period, a slight rise between February and March but this is being controlled.

Public Dose Evaluation, the NRPB model has been used to make an assessment of the doses that could have been received by hypothetical "worst case groups or individuals. The calculations have used AWE's known discharges of RA materials during the quarter and the last 12 months. The doses show some small increases, the largest (an increase of 0.00008mSv/year) being attributable to some decommissioning work on the old tritium facility. These are minute amounts relative to the NRPB guidance level of 0.3mSv/year from a single installation or 0.5mSv/year from a nuclear site, a magnitude of 4 or 5 difference. The results confirm the findings of independent studies such as Southampton University that there is no significant hazard to members of the public from discharges.

HSE/NII Meeting in London

The Managing Director and Director Assurance attended a Top Level meeting on the 3rd June in London. It was organised by the HSE/NII. A meeting such as this was last held over four years ago. Directors attended the meeting from all nuclear operators and representatives from the MoD, our customer, were present. All operators were given an opportunity to put forward their views to HSE/NII.

On behalf of AWE, Bill Haight presented our views on the importance to us of experienced inspectors and specialist assessors whose work is consistent and co-ordinated; we also mentioned the importance of early engagement in our development activities and proportional regulation. This means that we believe that regulation should be focused on the most important controls we have in place to eliminate hazards and reduce risk overall.

There was much discussion about the NII's role in influencing International regulation and about the differences in regulation between operating facilities and decommissioning facilities. We were particularly interested in NII's proposals that they would like to consider more secondments between operating companies and the NII.

New Heads of Environment and Security

George Wall has retired from AWE after many years' service. The company is pleased to announce that his replacement, Gareth Beard, took over from 1st May. Gareth joins AWE from the Environment Agency. His twelve years of regulatory experience in process industries and radioactive substances with his broad knowledge of the AWE sites will contribute much to an already very competent Environment Team within our Assurance Directorate.

Peter Dennison has also joined AWE as the new Head of Security. Peter has had a very distinguished career in the services and has worked at the very highest levels of MoD in relation to security matters. Prior to joining us he was a security adviser and project manager for the EU Infromal Security Group in Israel and the Occupied Territories.

ROSPA Awards

For the fourth successive year, AWE has been awarded the prestigious Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Defence Industry Sector Award for our outstanding record in Occupational Safety and Health. This award not only recognises AWE's efforts at reducing accidents and ill health at work, but also for having an effective safety management system and for our actions taken to develop company wide improvements towards protecting people from harm. This is an incredible achievement for AWE, and is a credit to everyone who works here including employees, contractors, trade unions representatives and Ministry of Defence personnel. This year also proved more difficult to make a good entry as RoSPA had changed their criteria for submissions.

ROSPA Construction

The Construction Management Department was set up in January 2003 and during it's first year has managed construction projects which have accumulated 75 000 hrs without a reportable injury. This work along with the support offered to projects, work in support of the Project Delivery Process Map, and the SQEPing of key construction personnel amongst other activities led to the department being awarded a RoSPA Merit Award in May of this year. The Construction Industry has a poor safety record and everyone in the department, along with all of our contractors and the safety reps are committed to the concept of Zero Accidents, this award recognises the work done to date to help achieve this and sets challenging standards for the future.

Latest Assessment Activity against Management System Standards: Quality ISO 9001 2000; Environment ISO 140001, Security BS7799.

The largest external assessment of AWE's Management Systems took place in April and May of 2004. The Assessment Team was made up of 7 LRQA auditors and included 58 days of auditing over a 4 week period. This assessment integrated for the first time all 3 standards in the same assessment programme and resulted in the continuing certification of BS 7799 and the re-certification of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 (the re-certification dates currently differ due to the different commencement of initial certification and are in the process of being aligned).

RSA Application

AWE has applied to the Environment Agency for a variation to its Radioactive Substances Authorisation. George Wall organised a half-day workshop for LLC and Cllr Bill Cane will give a report update on the event.

Environment Week 2004

A three day exhibition on the environment was held to coincide with World Environment Day. The theme was oceans and rivers although AWE took the opportunity to show how our small environmental impact was being managed across a wide range of aspects such as waste, air, radioactive discharges, ecology and biodiversity. Over 750 visitors, mostly staff and key

stakeholders participated in the exhibition and learned how to minimise their own environmental impacts at home as well as at work.

Essential Services Supplies Plant House (ESSPH) effluent overflow, 18 May 2004

As part of AWE's commitment to improving our environmental impact the company recently replaced aging ion exchange water treatment plant with a state of the art reverse osmosis water treatment plant. This equipment is used to soften and purify water used in the boilerhouses. The new process uses common salt as the softening reagent instead of caustic soda and hydrochloric acid. By removing the latter from site, the potential accidental risk to the environment is reduced as well as preventing discharge of very slight levels of mercury contamination inherent in the caustic soda. It appears that after some months of trial the drains of the boilerhouse have unexpectedly become sufficiently blocked up with scale that the pumping of the effluent to foul drains failed and 30 litres of the effluent overflowed onto concrete near the sump pit. The water treatment equipment was embargoed pending investigation and the Environment Agency notified without delay. The LLC will be informed of the outcome of the investigation at the next meeting.

International Study on the Health of Radiation Workers

AWE, through the National Registry of Radiation Workers run by the National Radiological Protection Board, has been taking part in an international study on the health of its radiation workers. This international study has been organised by the International Agency for Research into Cancer (IARC), a UN organisation.

The IARC study is probably the most comprehensive radiation study ever undertaken. The radiation doses received by workers from over 16 countries, including the main European countries, USA and Canada have been compared to the cancer data for those workers to see if there is any correlation between them. The IARC study is due to be published in the Lancet in the near future. Before the study is published, the researchers will present their results to the main employers and Trades Unions involved, including AWE. This will allow AWE to talk to its workers, and other stakeholders, before the results are formally published in the Lancet.

AWE has always fully co-operated, with the agreement of the Trades Unions and the workers concerned, with studies into the health of our employees. The studies published so far have not shown any significant correlation between the radiation doses received by our workers and deleterious health effects. In addition, AWE is part of the national radiation compensation scheme where any worker can submit a claim for compensation without the need to go to court. This scheme is independently run and takes a generous approach when dealing with any claim. The scheme is jointly administered by the management of the major nuclear industry companies and the Trades Unions.

6. Feedback from the LLC workshop on RSA submissions – Bill Cane

The following proposals have been made by AWEE to the Environment Agency and the outcome of that submission is awaited:

Authorised disposal routes

- Gaseous to the environment-no change
- Aqueous to public sewer only-Pangbourne Pipeline closed and Aldermaston stream consented
- Organic liquids and some solid wastes-a incineration at Fawley, Leeds and Colnbrook
- Mercury - Winfrith
- Solid Low Level Waste - Winfrith and Drigg
- Transfers to MoD
- Intermediate Level Waste remains on site and AWE has no High Level Waste

Solid Low Level Waste to Winfrith and Drigg

- All Low Level Waste ends up at Drigg
- Not proposing any changes to limits
- Existing limits not fully utilised a but need to retain them in order not to inhibit NII approved decommissioning programme which is building up

Transfers to other premises

- Warhead waste to MoD
- Mercury to Winfrith
- Organic liquids and some solid wastes to Shanks at Fawley, White Rose in Leeds and Grundon's in Colnbrook - all existing EA authorised sites which will not need to increase their limits in order to receive AWE wastes

Receipts from other premises

- Burghfield
- Blacknest
- Foulness
- Cardiff and Borehamwood have been removed
- Other premises approved in advance by the EA

Information and improvement requirements - completed

1. Baseline management system by May 2000
2. Aqueous strategy October 2000
3. Aqueous Best Practical Environmental Option (BPEO) October 2000
4. Aqueous measurement October 2000
5. aqueous implementation strategy April 2001
6. BPEO for decommissioning Pangbourne Pipeline April 2001
7. Strategy for 1TBq tritiated waste April 2002
8. Review of Best Practical Method (BPM) on waste minimisation April 2003
9. Review of BPM on waste assay April 2003

Information and improvement requirements - outstanding

10. Cease discharges at Pangbourne April 2005
11. Cease discharges of Tritium above background into the Aldermaston Stream April 2005
12. Cease discharges of radioactive aqueous waste to sewer April 2010

Aqueous discharges

- System 1 - Pangbourne Pipeline will close on or by 31st March 2005
- System 2 - Public sewer to Silchester sewage works will continue at reduced limits
- System 3 - North Ponds Water Management System to change from an authorised discharge route to a consented outfall

Missing three slides

Comparison to WHO drinking guidelines

	WHO GUIDELINES	DISCHARGE LIMITS
Total Alpha	100 Bq/cubic metre	333Bq/cubic metre
Total Beta	1000 Bq/cubic metre	1000Bq/cubic metre
Tritium	7800 Bq/litre	833 Bq/litre

Gaseous discharges

- Currently 9 tables

- Suggesting a reduction to 4 tables covering Research, Production, and Waste Management
- Each table will continue to have an Annual Rate and a Quarterly Notification Limit

Annual Liquid Discharge Dose (1) Worker at Silchester Sewage Treatment Works

2000 Limiting Discharges	2003 Actual Discharges	2004 Proposed Limits
0.51 μSv	0.033 μSv	0.16 μSv

- *Public dose limit = 1000 μSv*
- *Constraint at for single site = 500 μSv*
- *Average natural background = 2200 μSv*
- *Average medical exposure = 400 μSv*

Dose Summary

All the doses are below 1% of the public dose limit..... usually much less

Summary

- Reduced limits on all aqueous and airborne discharges
- Improved confidence in their ability to control decommissioning discharges
- Application of BPM will continue to minimise actual discharges
- Doses to critical groups are radiologically insignificant

The LLC workshop suggested that the EA should issue a leaflet for the general public laying out tables of comparisons in simple terms, comparing WHO limits and AWE discharges and comparisons of radiological effects, for example related to a flight to Spain etc. The workshop also asked the EA to only involve the local population. The question was what AWE's discharges into the local environment should be, but some groups external to the local area wanted a debate on whether or not the UK should have a nuclear deterrent, that question was not for this forum.

7. A Infrastructure Issues – Jonathan Brown, Director Infrastructure

Environmental Stewardship Leaflet

A new Environmental Leaflet covering a summary of legacy issues and the plans and progress AWE is making against them has been produced.

Orion

The MoD will resubmit the Orion Notice of Planned Development to West Berkshire Council with additional environmental information on 23rd June. Jonathan Brown, project sponsor and project manager plan to attend. Daryl Landeg gave members more details about Orion as part of the HELEN visit. It is proposed to build the new Orion facility on a brownfield site at the west end of the Aldermaston Site.

A340 Roadworks

AWE staff have met with Hampshire County Council engineers to discuss the impact of the roadworks. They were given a full run down on how the work will proceed. AWE will be advising staff to car share or come to work by bus, bicycle or on foot during the anticipated 20-week disruption.

Pangbourne Pipeline and replacement facility

The project is making good progress and is on schedule for completion.

New Sludge Treatment Plant

New tanks have been installed and commissioned that will allow cementation of the sludge in situ.

Site Development

Planning work for the Sites Development plans continues. Tenders have been returned and are being evaluated for the upgrade to the Burghfield Infrastructure.

Presentation slides attached

8. Any Other Business

9. Visit to HELEN Laser

10. Date of next meetings

Thursday 2nd September 2004

Thursday 2nd December 2004

Avril Burdett
Secretary to the AWE Local Liaison Committee