

Minutes of the 41st AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting

Thursday 9th June 2005

Present:

Malcolm Hutchinson	Executive Chairman, AWE	Chairman LLC
Jonathan Brown	Director Infrastructure, AWE	
Dr Angela Jenkins	Director Assurance, AWE	
Avril Burdett	Corporate Communications, AWE	Secretary LLC
Lindsey Appleton	Corporate Communications, AWE	
Gareth Beard	Head of Environment, AWE	
Ms Roz Baxter	West Berkshire Council	
Cllr P Beard	Reading Borough Council	
Cllr Mike Broad	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Malcolm Bryant	Wokingham Unitary	
Cllr Bill Cane	Mortimer West End PC	LLC Community Liaison Rep.
Cllr Dennis Cowdery	Brimpton PC	
Cllr David Dymond	Reading Borough Council	
Cllr Terry Faulkner	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Pat Garrett	Baughurst PC	
Cllr Phil Gowen	West Berkshire Council	
Cllr Peter Hobbs	Sulhampstead Parish Council	
Cllr Gordon Lewis	Holybrook PC	
Cllr Royce Longton	West Berkshire Council	
Cllr Martin Maynard	Pangbourne PC	
Cllr Jeff Moss	Swallowfield PC	
Cllr Irene Neill	West Berkshire Council	
Tom Payne	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council	
Cllr Dr Murray Roberts	Padworth PC	
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston PC	
Cllr Alan Sumner	Wokefield Parish Council	
Mr Bill Taylor	Stratfield Mortimer PC	
Cllr Graham Ward	Woolhampton PC	
Cllr Tim Whitaker	Mapledurham PC	
Cllr David Wood	Theale Parish Council	

Observers:

Mike Jeal	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (Presenter)
Steve Lewis	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
Andy Curran	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
Darren Baker	Environment Agency
Craig Reiersen	Environment Agency

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies from: Bill Haight, Managing Director, AWE; Mr Angus Campbell; Cllr Glyn Charlesworth; Mr A Craft; Cllr Margaret Dadswell; Geoff Eddy; Cllr Michael Lochrie; Cllr Doug Mundy; Cllr G Traynor; Cllr Roy Waite.

2. Actions from the last Meeting

Action 40/4: Secretary to arrange a presentation on Staff Issues. The Director responsible for HR issues had been taken ill and therefore the presentation was postponed until the September meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

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

Einstein Year at AWE -The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has declared 2005 to be 'International Year of Physics' and Einstein Year and AWE will be holding a celebration of science, engineering and technology in September. It will take the form of an exhibition, a series of lectures and facility visits. Senior figures from academia, science, engineering, defence and professional institutions will be invited to attend as well as staff. One day will be designated as Schools Day. Local schools have been invited to send parties of students to visit the exhibition and hear lectures relating to the National Curriculum. Plans are also being made for a Families Event. Professor Malcolm Longair, Head of the Cavendish Laboratory, will conduct the official opening.

AWEsome Science Campaign - AWE is raising the profile of its community science and engineering work under a new campaign banner called 'AWEsome Science.' The campaign was launched at the beginning of June with the donation of digital computer microscopes to 41 local schools.

The communications campaign links several existing schools, science and engineering initiatives. It will include activities undertaken as part of our Schools' Liaison programme, plus the annual graduate challenges and the company's Einstein Year event in September. This 'joined-up' approach to our community work will reinforce the message to external stakeholders that AWE is a centre of scientific and engineering excellence.

Portal Monitors have been installed at AWE Aldermaston, monitoring for radioactive materials as they leave site. The system detects the inadvertent removal of radioactive sources and materials from site where procedures for removal of such material may not have been followed correctly. Similar systems operate at many other nuclear establishments and have been operating at scrap metal merchants' premises for many years. Such systems are also beginning to be introduced at points of entry into the UK. The system involves passive detection of radiation only and is harmless to operators and personnel going through the portal. There is no irradiation of persons passing through the detector and heart pacemakers are unaffected.

Protests at AWE and Press Speculation - The anti-nuclear 'Block the Builders' campaign has been receiving coverage in the local media recently and articles about the Government's nuclear weapons policy have appeared in the national press.

Some of this is based on unfounded protester speculation that AWE is making the next generation of nuclear weapons. This appears to be related to our modernisation programme as set out in our publicly available Sites Development Strategy Plan and the fact that recruitment continues to take place.

To fulfil our mission of supplying and maintaining warheads for Trident, the UK's nuclear deterrent, regular recruitment takes place in order to maintain the skills base AWE requires. This is necessary both to maintain the age profile of our workforce and to add the additional skills needed in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty era where we must use cutting edge science to maintain the safety and effectiveness of the UK Stockpile.

In July last year, the Secretary of State for Defence told Parliament that "the Government remains committed to maintaining the effectiveness of the nuclear deterrent, including making the necessary investment at the Atomic Weapons Establishment ... and to keep open the options for a successor to Trident until a decision is required. The Minister suggested that a decision would probably be required during the current Parliament.

In order to keep you, and other stakeholders, up to date with our plans for the future of our sites, we are planning to update the Site Development Strategy Plan public information leaflet later this year. The leaflet – last updated in 2003 - gives an overview of our plans as they are developing.

Aldermaston Sitex - As part of AWE's continuous improvement programme, and in order to fulfil the requirements of Licence Condition 11 (Emergency Arrangements) of the Nuclear Site Licence, a major site exercise will take place at Aldermaston during the morning of Wednesday 6th July 2005. Representatives of the Health and Safety Executive/NI I and MoD will observe this Level 1 exercise as part of their normal duties. It is likely that the "take shelter" alarm will be sounded, placing the AWE (A) site under cover for the duration of the exercise.

Good Safety Record on new Waste Water Treatment Plant Construction - AWE and principal contractors, RWE NUKEM, have jointly marked the continuing excellent construction safety record on our new wastewater treatment plant by donating £250 to Reading's Safety Street initiative. This donation is in recognition of latest significant accident-free safety milestone achieved during the two-year construction period of AWE's new wastewater treatment plant at Aldermaston. Richard Tyndall, Chair of the Safety Street Trustees, said that Safety Street's whole purpose has been in the prevention of avoidable accidents – which is a goal they share. Cllr Williams asked for an update on the progress of the new Waste Water Treatment Plant. Jonathan Brown re0ported that the new plant was undergoing stimulant trials and the results were encouraging, the water coming out at the end of the process showed very good decontamination. It was expected that live commissioning would start in July.

Cllr Maynard asked if there would be further discharges down the Pangbourne Pipeline. He was told categorically that there would be no further discharges down the Pangbourne Pipeline. He asked when the discharge nozzles would be removed from the Thames. Jonathan Brown said that over the last few months a team had been reviewing the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) study. That process was likely to take twelve months. This would ensure that the right decision was made and the right program devised for the long-term future of the pipeline. Once that decision had been reached and agreed there would be further communication with the stakeholders involved. He repeated his assurance that no discharges into the River Thames via the Pangbourne Pipeline would be made. Currently 30% of the available capacity for storing the liquid effluent formerly discharged down the pipeline had been reached. There had been a significant reduction in the amount of liquid effluent produced by AWE which is currently 1500m³ per year, a reduction of 75% of previous levels.

Cllr Sumner asked what the new disposal route would be. Jonathan Brown said that the cleaned waste water would be discharged to trade waste.

Cllr Williams asked whether there would be a consultation exercise when the section of pipeline from the pump house to the Thames is removed, as there were issues such as a public

footpath across the land. Jonathan Brown said that such issues would be a major consideration and stakeholders in the project would hear from AWE next year.

Corporate Social Responsibility Stakeholder Survey -

CSR Mission: Working together to achieve our corporate mission and vision responsibly, and sustainably, through partnership, leadership and integrity CSR Vision: Being recognised as meeting the needs of present and future stakeholders, through open and inclusive management of our environmental, social and economic impacts.

Various groups of people with interests in AWE will be contacted in the near future to give their opinions on aspects of AWE's interaction with stakeholders.

A discussion followed on the relative merits of using a small sample for the stakeholder analysis. Miss Appleton explained that the object was not to have another PASCALEA type survey but just to take a baseline view of AWE's performance on Corporate Social Responsibility issues. She assured members that they would be given a report at the end of the survey.

Corporate Brochure - We are currently in the final stages of putting together a general 'Corporate Brochure' which is a general guide to AWE with a theme of 'Meeting the Challenge' The brochure will provide a broad summary of what AWE does to a diverse range of external stakeholders. It will be used to support AWE's Corporate Social Responsibility programme. The key messages are that AWE is a highly successful, forward thinking organisation at the cutting edge of science and technology. The brochure will be used to reinforce AWE's position as world leading in safety and environmental management and explain the Company policy of being a good and safe neighbour. The brochure will be published in the next few weeks.

Action 41/1: Secretary to send copies of the brochure to members.

5. Health, Safety and Environmental Report - Dr Angela Jenkins, Director Assurance

Investors in Excellence - AWE has been 'Recognised for Excellence' under the British Quality Foundation Investors in Excellence Programme. Investors in Excellence is a national recognition programme based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) business excellence model.

Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Awards - AWE has been awarded the RoSPA Defence Industry Commendation 2005. The award recognises successful performance over the past year, and clear evidence of a continually improving safety culture over a number of years. AWE has also been awarded the RoSPA Bronze Award for its good record in construction safety. AWE has been Highly Commended in the RoSPA Astor Trophy category. This confirms AWE's position as one of the best organisations in the provision of occupational health processes.

Cllr Moss asked whether not winning the top awards meant that standards were dropping, and how were they judged. Dr Jenkins replied that RoSPA ask for an evidence pack which assist the committee in making their decision. She assured members that standards were not dropping and saw it as good motivation to continue improving and to win the trophy back.

Assurance Exhibition - Gordon Ramsay, celebrity chef, was the star attraction at the 4th Assurance Exhibition held in April. The theme of the event was developing a 'Passion for Quality' and aimed to encourage visitors to think about how to get things right first time, the subject of a recent campaign at AWE. Gordon talked about his passion for quality and that his reputation is based on getting things right first time.

Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations (MSER) 2005 - A new set of explosives regulations came into force on 26th April 2005. This health and safety legislation is significant to AWE. MSER takes AWE from regulation by MoD to regulation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Explosives Inspectorate. It covers every aspect of AWE's explosives operations and business, including areas adjacent to AWE explosives areas. MSER is supported by an approved code of practice. Its main requirements are: prevention of unplanned fire or explosion, limiting the extent of fire or explosion and protection of people from the effects of fire or explosion. The new regulations have been applied immediately, although there is a three-year transition period to complete the acquisition of the HSE explosives site licences. AWE will be making applications for these licenses in the coming months and the associated licence schedules will be completed in around two years time. AWE is well placed to comply with MSER and is working closely with MoD and HSE stakeholders to deliver this transition programme.

Environmental Monitoring Data on AWE WEBSITE - As part of our ongoing commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility we are now publishing more data on our website. The data for 2003-2004 is now reproduced on our website www.awe.co.uk and can be viewed by navigation through the Science and Technology menu to reach Publications.

AWE Environment Exhibition 2005 - The annual AWE Environment Exhibition will be held on 12, 13, 14 July at Aldermaston and on 20th July at Burghfield. Members wishing to attend should contact Gareth Beard on 0118 982 7934.

Radioactive Substances Act - Authorisation Review - The Environment Agency will be reviewing AWE's radioactive waste discharge authorisations. The Agency has informed AWE of the scope and methodology of the review, setting out its position in a 'Process and Considerations' Document which should have been received by LLC members from the EA. AWE has a target to respond to the Process & Considerations requirements by the end of 2005 or earlier.

Bill Cane asked for clarification on item 6 of the HSE NII report. He was told that every facility at AWE of a certain hazard category, for example one which might cause a release to atmosphere, has a safety case. It explains how that facility is managed to maintain safety and includes detailed technical analysis looking at all potential accidents and incidents which are then prioritised. The facility and its operations must be designed to encompass the safety of all those hazards. AWE has methodologies to demonstrate the safe design and management of facilities to NII. The methodology is agreed with NII through a series of ongoing discussions as technology, working practices and analysis methodologies improve.

Cllr Broad said that over the years there seemed to have been a number of incidents with breathing apparatus and asked whether sufficient attention was paid to purchase, manufacture and design of this equipment. He was assured that a great deal of attention was paid to this,

but all such protective equipment was subject to wear and tear. AWE has processes in place to check, maintain and test equipment and was always looking to the marketplace for better equipment and processes. Jonathan Brown added that firemen had been recently given upgraded equipment for breathing air following issues with the previous equipment. Members were also assured that any issue related to safety equipment was automatically elevated to a primary focus for attention. Malcolm Hutchinson said that this showed the need for continuous improvement as with everything AWE did. He said that AWE could never say they were doing enough and always strived to do better; there was no complacency in any of the Company's activities.

Performance against Key Performance Indicators

Slides attached

Dr Jenkins explained that she had changed the reporting from a calendar year to a financial year. This meant that the period from January to March was being compared to 2004 performance. At the next meeting she would introduce new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Injuries - this covered all accidents including cut fingers. The data showed that the number of injuries was decreasing. It also showed year-on-year reductions.

Lost Time Accidents (LTAs) - The January lost time accident had been a Ministry of Defence Policeman on a dog training exercise. He had run after his dog and damaged the cartilage in his knee. In February a member of staff working in a laboratory had bent to do something close to the floor and hurt his knee. In March a member of staff had slipped on an ungritted footpath. Malcolm Hutchinson pointed out that these were very mundane accidents when talking about a nuclear establishment and the trend was improving. However, there was no complacency. Cllr Shirt asked what the ratio was between staff and contractors; he was told that it was approximately 3:1.

ESH event index - Reporting of any ESH event was ranked in severity with credit for reporting near misses. The results were slightly over target with a few more level 2 events in relation to levels 1 and 0.

Non-attendance – Although the January figure was high the level was now decreasing. Dr Jenkins said she the company continues to apply an absence management process.

Dose Rates - quarter 1 had already been better than last year's performance.

Collective Dose - this was within target for quarter 1

Public Dose - results were down in Picosieverts, (10^{-12} or one $10,000,000,000,000^{\text{th}}$ of a Sievert) extremely small numbers.

Security Index - performance was improving, but there was no complacency.

Recycling - staff were finding this a tough target which they were not quite reaching. Jonathan Brown's area was working hard to make improvements.

Liquid discharges - the Company's internal target on beta discharge had just been exceeded. This was related to decommissioning work being done. The result was still well within the Environment Agency's Authorisation limits.

Airborne Discharges were within the company targets and the Authorisation limits.

Contract Year 6 KPIs – AWE will be introducing OSHA system (Occupational Safety & Health Administration index) of measuring performance. This is an internationally recognised system which gives a better basis for comparison than lost time accidents. OSHA includes incidents giving rise to any time off work. This will help to compare our performance with the rest of the nuclear industry and UK industry in general.

Cllr David Leeks said that it was not possible to see the detail of the presentation slides and asked for copies to be given to members at the meeting.

Action 41/2: Provide handouts of Assurance presentations at the meeting.

Cllr Pat Garrett asked how many measurements were taken. Dr Jenkins told her that AWE carried out monitoring of staff and the environment and the impact was calculated for a 'critical group' of people. This fictional group of people are assumed to have a lifestyle which exposes them to the maximum possible effects from AWE. Environmental monitoring confirms that nobody is receiving levels of radiation which would give rise to health effects. Monitoring rarely finds anything, and results have to be calculated.

COMARE (Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment) Report Presentation – Richard Wilkins, Head of Corporate Radiological Protection
Slides attached

Cllr Dennis Cowdery asked if the statistics within the 25km radius included Didcot Power station at the time when it burned only coal. This was correct. The report covered 13 nuclear power stations and there was no evidence to confirm increased risk of childhood cancers and leukaemias.

Cllr Pat Garrett asked whether comparisons had been made with effects of naturally occurring radiation in areas such as Cornwall, she was told that the next COMARE report will review the occurrence of cancer clusters generally in the UK which would therefore cover Cornwall. Cllr David Shirt asked what aspects the next report (on clusters nationwide) would cover. That information was not yet available.

Cllr Malcolm Bryant asked whether the report looked at the effect of overhead power lines. He was told that the current report focussed on nuclear establishments but it may be possible to look at this in the context of the next COMARE report. Cllr Penny Williams commented that there seemed to be nothing new in the report, it was confirmed that it was a revision of an earlier report with an extra eight years of data giving the same conclusions.

In answer to a question Richard Wilkins undertook to find if there was any information on the rate of occurrence of childhood cancer across Europe.

7. Infrastructure Report – Jonathan Brown, Director Infrastructure

Travel Survey - AWE has been carrying out a travel survey with the aim of preparing a Transport Strategy that identifies and provides solutions to existing problems and goes on to provide the foundations for a robust future plan. Jonathan Brown added that AWE wanted to have input into local transport plans. He said that he would welcome input from members and asked members to contact himself or the Secretary if they had information which they felt was relevant. A discussion followed.

Update on Planning - Submissions were made earlier this year to West Berkshire planners for a Modular Temporary Accommodation (MTA) building and two IT facilities. Progress on the buildings has been good and foundations are in place and services are being installed. At Burghfield, refurbishment is being carried out on an accommodation building to modernise it. An area at the west end of the Aldermaston site is being cleared for re-development as the main accommodation area. There will be further planning submissions for accommodation as we progressively close down the inefficient buildings and migrate people to modern and efficient buildings.

Waste - see attached slides.

Jonathan Brown explained how waste was stored on site, packaged for either storage or transport, monitored and transported.

8. Presentation – The Orion Project – Daryl Landeg, Head of Plasma Physics

Slides attached.

Cllr Pat Garrett asked whether AWE would be using its own team for the project. Dr Landeg explained that the construction of the building would be carried out by contractors and for the installation of the laser would be a mixture of specialist contractors and AWE staff.

9. Any Other Business

Cllr David Leeks asked about the impact of AWE's recruitment of additional staff on the local housing market. The presentation at the next meeting on HR matters will cover this topic. Cllr Leeks also thanks NII's Mike Jeal for his excellent presentation to the Tadley Town Meeting. He also complained that a police car had been parked in a disabled parking bay. Cllr Leeks said that the number of disabled bays should be reduced and the remaining ones not abused. **Note:** The Secretary raised an 'Abnormal Event form' following the meeting to ensure that this issue is investigated.

Cllr David Shirt asked whether the minutes could be sent to him electronically.

Action 41/3: Members please advise the Secretary if you prefer to receive minutes and other communications electronically.

Cllr David Wood asked how AWE was working to reduce CO₂ emissions. Jonathan Brown explained that usage of electricity had been reduced by 16.5% since 1997 and this trend was expected to continue. A new heating programme was underway at the Burghfield site. The heating system for the future would be a modern, energy-efficient gas-fired, decentralised system which would mean that the boiler house could be decommissioned. This would probably reduce direct CO₂ emissions by 60%. A similar system would then be installed at the Aldermaston site, which will result in the steam mains being taken out of service. The early stages of this project will probably result in a 10% reduction. New builds on both sites will be energy efficient.

Members asked whether AWE had an energy efficiency strategy, Jonathan Brown confirmed this and said he would put the topic on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action 41/4: Energy Efficiency Strategy as an agenda item at the 42nd LLC meeting.

Cllr Pat Garrett asked whether, if the Government went forward on the next generation of nuclear energy production, it would mean more work for AWE. It was explained that this would not be the case as AWE is not in the field of nuclear energy production. It could impact on the availability of skills in the nuclear industry.

Cllr Shirt had attended a CoRWM workshop and gave a short presentation.

Mike Jeal, NII Inspector introduced a new member of the NII's AWE Inspection Team, Andy Curran.

10. Date of next meetings

Thursday 15th September 2005

Thursday 1st December 2005

Avril Burdett
Secretary to the AWE Local Liaison Committee