

Minutes of the 58th AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting

Friday 2 October 2009

Present:

Robin McGill	Managing Director, AWE	Chairman LLC
Dr Andrew Jupp	Director Infrastructure, AWE	
Heather Young	Director Assurance, AWE	
Alan Price	Head Corporate Communications, AWE	
Lindsey Appleton	Corporate Affairs Manager, AWE	Secretary LLC
Cllr Philip Bassil	Brimpton Parish Council	
Cllr Michael Bound	Basingstoke & Deane Council	
Cllr Mike Broad	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Pat Garrett	Baughurst Parish Council	
Cllr John Heggadon	Shinfield Parish Council	
Cllr Dudley Ives	Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council	
Cllr Kay Lacey	Pangbourne Parish Council	
Cllr David Leeks	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Ian Lindsay	Wasing Parish Council	
Cllr George McGarvie	Pamber Parish Council	
Jeff Moss	Swallowfield Parish Council	
Cllr Irene Neill	West Berkshire Council	
Cllr Murray Roberts	Padworth Parish Council	
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston Parish Council	
Cllr Chris Souden	Sulhamstead Parish Council	
Cllr Clive Vare	Aldermaston Parish Council	
Cllr Tim Whitaker	Mapledurham Parish Council	
Cllr Jenny Williams	Silchester Parish Council	
Cllr Richard Willis	Reading Borough Council	
Regulators:		
Andrew Pembroke	Environment Agency	

Introduction

Mr McGill welcomed members to the 58th meeting.

Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Jonathan Chishick, Cllr Pennee Chopping, Cllr Geoff Findlay, Cllr Valerie Frost, Cllr Mick Hall, Julie James, Cllr Royce Longton, Carolyn Murison, Cllr Barry Richards, Cllr David Wood.

Actions from the last meeting

Action 57/1: A request for assistance in the development of local emergency plans-this was covered later in the meeting.

Action 57/2: To remind employees of speed limits around the site- this was done via an article internally and will be an on-going campaign.

Minutes of the 57th Meeting

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Chairman's remarks – Mr Robin McGill, Chief Executive, AWE.

Non-Proliferation

Headline news in the Newbury Weekly News raised fears for the future of AWE. This followed a speech by the Prime Minister in New York as part of the UK contribution to the nuclear non-proliferation process.

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Mr Brown said that the UK would explore the feasibility of maintaining our minimum deterrent from the mid 2020s with three new submarines, rather than four used at present. He was not suggesting any reduction in the requirement for AWE to supply and maintain warheads for the deterrent. In fact, AWE also plays an important role in supporting the UK Government in the field of non-proliferation and verifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Mr McGill stressed that if there is something LLC members need to be aware of concerning AWE, then they can expect to hear direct from the Company.

Cllr Neill asked whether a possible change of Government would have an effect on AWE's future. Mr McGill said policy is a matter for the Government. However, AWE appreciated the pressure on the public purse and the Company is constantly challenged to ensure it remains cost effective. Whilst safety and security would always be protected, the Company constantly looked for ways to improve efficiency.

Secretary of State Visit

The Secretary of State (SOS) for Defence, the Right Honourable Bob Ainsworth, MP, visited AWE in September. The SOS was extremely supportive and positive about what he saw and heard during his visit. The visit gave the Company an ideal opportunity to showcase the work the Company are doing and the capability we have on our sites and amongst our people.

Contract Signing

The Company has a 25-year Management and Operation contract to run AWE on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) with pricing reviews every five years. Agreement has been reached for the next priced period which runs through to the end of March 2013.

Improving our Business

Over the last few months a review of AWE's business has taken place to ensure that the Company is in the best possible shape to meet the challenges of delivering its programme. A few areas have been identified where improvements can be made to improve the focus of our operations, increase accountability and make better use of the skills and capabilities the business has at its disposal. A number of changes have been made, starting by reshaping the Executive team which leads the business.

Gemini 1 formal handover

The Gemini office complex is moving ever closer to occupancy. In August, building contractors BAM formally handed the first of the two buildings over to the Company. This handover was a significant achievement for the AWE and BAM team who have worked on the Gemini building project. Final preparations will now be completed before the building is cleaned and it is anticipated staff will occupy this building mid October.

Visual Identity and Style Guide

Work has been on-going to refresh AWE's branding. New Visual Identity and Style Guidelines were launched in August. These will help ensure our brand is not only instantly recognisable, but also clear, consistent and concise for both staff and external audiences alike. The guidelines have been devised for use by everyone working at AWE, as well as any external suppliers we may commission to produce communications for us. They will be applied across the whole range of our work; from a simple poster announcement through to a complicated exhibition.

Project Circinus

Project Circinus - the High Explosives Fabrication Facility (HEFF) planned for the Aldermaston site - received Gate 3 approval from the Investment Sanction Board (ISB) in July. Pre-construction preparation work is now well underway and the project team are looking forward to progressing the project to completion and delivering a key capability for AWE.

High-Visibility

Since July, everyone working on or visiting AWE Burghfield is required to wear a "high-visibility" jacket or vest when outside the office or facility. Wearing a high-visibility vest is a positive and

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proactive step towards safeguarding health and safety. All employees on at Burghfield have been issued with their own high-visibility vest.

Microsoft Challenge

AWE has entered the Microsoft UK Challenge for the past five years and teams have achieved 1st, 2nd, 4th and 8th positions (out of 100 plus teams competing from across UK business). This performance has taken the Company to the World Challenge finals on four occasions.

In this year's event, all three AWE teams performed exceptionally well. The senior team finished in second place, five minutes behind the winners. The novice team finished a commendable 20th and the mixed team finished in 28th place.

SET Awards

These annual awards recognise achievements in the Science Engineering and Technology fields during 2008.

The John Challens Medal was awarded to John Maw who has enjoyed a distinguished career since joining AWE over 40 years ago. John is a worthy winner of this award which recognises an individual who has made a sustained, high quality and valued contribution to the work of AWE in the SET field internally and externally.

The Clive Marsh Award goes to an individual who is judged to have made the most innovative contribution in the SET field, demonstrating flair and creativity, during the early stage of his or her career. This year the award went to Dr David Johnson who, since joining AWE, has made a significant contribution in electromechanical devices.

The JC (Charlie) Martin awards recognise excellent technical content, originality and presentation demonstrated in an AWE internal report or externally published paper. The award for an internal report went to Alan Mears for his publication "Further analysis of KRAKATAU region 1" whilst the award for an external paper goes to Mike Hutchinson for his paper entitled: "The escape of blast from fragmenting munitions casings".

The Chief Scientific Adviser Ministry of Defence award went to Chris Marsh who invented an ingenious stronglink concept based on the combination of a tooth-wheel principle and a coded maze to discriminate the unique signal. This award recognises a team or individual who has applied the highest levels of originality, creativity and innovation.

Health, Safety & Environmental Report – Heather Young, Director Environment, Health, Safety and Quality Slides attached

In her report, Heather Young informed the committee that a member of the public notified the Environment Agency that the discharge from the AWE's Circus Farm outfall was turning the stream cloudy. This had been caused by dislodged mud. Steps had been taken to ensure this did not happen again. In a separate event, traces of pesticide had been detected in Fisherman's Brook. The samples taken showed traces of HCH, however AWE has not used that chemical on site. No previous or subsequent readings have produced similar results, therefore the reading remains unexplained but the Environment Agency has issued a warning letter.

Process Safety

Heather Young reported that some low levels of contamination had been detected during routine decommissioning work. As a result of issues with a valve seal, caustic soda had been leaked and some natural gas had escaped from a boiler gas supply line.

There had been two lost time accidents in the period. One had resulted from a road traffic accident and the other from a person slipping on a flight of stairs. Both were minor incidents.

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Perfect Days

From October 1st AWE has introduced the concept of perfect days. Six criteria must be met to achieve a perfect day. If the Company has an imperfect day, it does not mean we are unsafe however. They focus on avoidance of work related injury or ill health that requires medical treatment, no reports to Regulators, community complaints, security issues and process safety control failures. If a perfect month is achieved, the Company will donate £1000 to a local charity.

Mr McGill said the concept would assist employees becoming more aware of the consequences of their own actions and the need for everyone to remain focussed.

**Infrastructure Report - Dr Andrew Jupp, Director Infrastructure
Slides attached****Planning**

John Steele gave an update on planning applications. Mr Steele reported that 250 trees have been planted in the last year near the boundary of the A340 and the Falcon gyratory system. Mr Steele said that as a result of strategic planting, the AWE Aldermaston Site will gradually become less visible from the roadside. Mr Steele was asked to monitor traffic around the Falcon gyratory before the next meeting of the Local Liaison Committee (LLC). **Action 58/1: John Steele**

At AWE Burghfield, Mr Steele said that the construction activities and the routes taken, has reduced the impact on traffic in the local area. No complaints have been received regarding traffic queues and since the last LLC, 6,000 HGV movements had taken place.

AWE has now been given formal certification from West Berkshire Council to begin construction on the new High Explosives Fabrication Facility (HEFF). Work on the facility will begin in November.

Emergency Preparedness

Paul Cooper gave an overview of AWE's site control function and emergency planning arrangements. He explained that site control is a 24/7 function which monitors site conditions to maintain safety and security. In answer to a question from Cllr McGarvie, Mr Cooper said fire drills are run throughout the year and there is a schedule for all buildings. It is important to maintain the skills of First Aiders and members of the medical staff assess them during exercises.

Ask the Regulators

There were no questions for the regulators at this meeting.

Any Other Business

Cllr Lacey asked whether there was a possibility of a small section of the Pangbourne Pipeline being removed at Sulham Brook. Dr Jupp agreed to look into the matter. **Action 58/2: Dr Jupp**.

Cllr Garrett asked whether AWE could assist with the development of the former Falcon Public House. Dr Jupp said this was outside AWE's remit. However, the Company continues to work with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) and local authorities on the implications of local development issues.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 10th December 2009

The meeting ended with a visit to the Situation Control Centre.

Lindsey Appleton
Secretary to the AWE LLC
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