



# Nuclear Information Service 2010 Annual Report

[nuclearinfo.org](http://nuclearinfo.org)



Artist: Pam Wilkinson

## CHAIR'S REPORT

Nuclear Information Service has gone from strength to strength since our reorganisation in 2009, and we continued to make strong progress in developing as an organisation during 2010. We are now set to concentrate on our research and advocacy work aimed at reducing and – hopefully - finally removing the risk of nuclear war or a nuclear accident. We recognise the key role of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) in achieving this end and will lobby for the establishment of AWE as an international centre of excellence for Disarmament Verification.

Our core role remains the provision of information about safety issues at the AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield nuclear weapons complexes in Berkshire. In 2010 we advised objectors and provided technical information about AWE's 'Pegasus' and 'Hydrus' planning applications and have become the first port of call for the media for reliable independent information relating to major news stories on the AWE. The fire at AWE's explosives facility in August and the planned takeover of the Coulport warhead store in Scotland by a consortium led by AWE are examples where the media relied on our work to break important stories. On the wider front, we have provided information and analysis of the impact the year's major political events have had on

nuclear disarmament: the general election, the Non Proliferation Treaty review conference, the Strategic Defence and Security Review, and the New START treaty. We continue to develop links with important stakeholders such as regulators, local councils, and MPs and cooperate closely with other NGOs in the arms control and disarmament sector.

To extend our reach and begin the process of communicating more effectively we have upgraded our web presence and recruited three new Board members, including Dr Nick Richie at Bradford University's School of Social and International Studies – an expert on the UK's nuclear weapons programme. The Board takes active responsibility for managing organisational risks, including health and safety and major policy and project decisions, and is there for the Director and Administrator to consult when required. We have improved this teamwork during 2010 and look forward to an important year for disarmament in 2011.

*Di McDonald – NIS Chair*



Nuclear Information Service is supported by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.



Supporters of SCANS highlight the dangers of nuclear submarine visits to civil ports.

## WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS

### NUCLEAR AWARENESS GROUP - COMMUNITY VOICES AGAINST AWE DEVELOPMENT

NIS supported the Nuclear Awareness Group (NAG) in its campaign work in opposition to two major planning applications at AWE and prepared detailed objections to each planning application on behalf of NAG. We also prepared a submission from NAG to the Boundary Hall planning inquiry, which investigated concerns over housing development surrounding AWE sites, and helped NAG organise a successful public meeting at which the Bishop of Reading spoke about his involvement in campaigning for nuclear disarmament.

### SCANS - EXPOSING NUCLEAR SUBMARINE SAFETY RISKS

The Solent Coalition Against Nuclear Ships (SCANS) has been campaigning against plans to reduce the size of emergency planning zones for berthed nuclear powered submarines and has engaged consultant nuclear engineer John Large to investigate the risks from reducing zone size. NIS organised media work on behalf of SCANS to promote John's findings and to highlight concerns about a subsequent visit of nuclear powered submarine HMS Torbay to Southampton's civil port.

### MAYORS FOR PEACE - HIGH LEVEL ENGAGEMENT ON NUCLEAR POLICY

NIS was asked by Mayors for Peace UK to consider how the UK government could best play a constructive role at the international Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference that took place in New York in May. We briefed the UK Mayors delegation to New York and also attended a meeting at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between Mayors for Peace and the then Minister for Non-Proliferation, Ivan Lewis MP, to discuss the UK's position at the conference.

### NUKEWATCH - TRACKING NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVOY MOVEMENTS

In 2010 Nukewatch monitored nuclear warhead convoy movements in January / February, February/ March, and July. A number of training convoys and movements of special nuclear materials were also observed. NIS assisted Nukewatch in monitoring and reporting on convoy movements, preparing Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests, and drafting a submission on the transport of nuclear weapons to support an NGO lobby of the Scottish Government to request further action on the 'Scotland Without Nuclear Weapons' project.



Bishop Stephen Cottrell, former Bishop of Reading, and NIS Director Peter Burt

## MONITORING THE ATOMIC WEAPONS ESTABLISHMENT

Events over the year at the Atomic Weapons Establishment showed the importance of NIS's role as an independent monitor able to observe activities at AWE sites and provide comment from a non-government perspective.

In February West Berkshire Council decided to grant planning permission for Project Pegasus, a new enriched uranium facility at AWE Aldermaston. In the absence of official information about hazards to safety and the environment associated with the development, NIS published a detailed briefing on the role of the new facility. Working with local campaign groups we also co-ordinated a street survey on public opinions to Project Pegasus, which showed that over 60% of those who were surveyed believed that the facility should not be built. Despite AWE's claims that public consultation had been a key aspect in preparation of the planning application for the new facility, nearly three quarters of those asked had not heard about the project before being approached to complete the survey. In the light of these concerns NIS approached Public Interest Lawyers Ltd who made representations to ensure that the Ministry of Defence and West Berkshire Council followed the correct legal procedures before granting planning permission.

At the beginning of August a serious fire broke out in the explosives handling area at AWE Aldermaston. NIS was able to reveal that the fire had resulted in asbestos contamination and worked with the

'Observer' newspaper to publish the fire service incident log for the fire, which revealed a number of shortfalls in AWE's emergency response.

Shortly afterwards AWE submitted a planning application for Project Hydrus – a new hydrodynamics research facility at Aldermaston. NIS again published a briefing about the potential impacts of the proposed facility and supported local groups in their efforts to raise local awareness about the proposal and provide members of the public with the opportunity to have their say on the development. Shortly after planning permission was granted the government announced that research work on warhead hydrodynamics would in future be carried out jointly with France, and that Project Hydrus would not be going ahead as originally envisaged.

Research by NIS also revealed that the Ministry of Defence was planning to privatise management of the Coulport nuclear weapons store in Scotland by handing it over to a commercial consortium comprised of AWE, Lockheed Martin, and Babcock International Group. These revelations developed into a major news story in Scotland.

NIS also conducted independent monitoring of 'Aldex 10', the three-yearly exercise of off-site emergency arrangements for the Atomic Weapons Establishment. Our recommendations following the exercise have been passed on West Berkshire Council, co-ordinators of the exercise, and will be published in April 2011.



## NIS'S YEAR IN NUMBERS

**34,603** website page views.  
**1468** objections to Project Pegasus and **1331** objections to Project Hydrus planning applications at AWE.  
**550** responses to our street survey on Project Pegasus.  
**371** email subscribers.  
**224** Tweets.  
**124** Parliamentary questions drafted in assistance to MPs.  
**45** Freedom of Information requests.  
**34** blog postings.  
**14** media releases.  
**10** editions of the NIS Update regular newsletter and **6** special briefings  
**9** letters published in the local and national press.  
**7** presentations given to local groups.

## FOLLOW US ONLINE:



**Web:**  
<http://nuclearinfo.org>



**Facebook:**  
**Nuclear Information Service**  
 (<http://bit.ly/ddXmsZ>)



**Twitter:**  
<http://twitter.com/nuclearinfo>

The Nuclear Information Service (NIS) is a not for profit, independent information service which works to promote public awareness and debate on nuclear weapons and related safety and environmental issues. Our core costs are met by grant funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, but we rely on donations for project work and legal costs. If you would like to help support NIS you can donate online via our PayPal account at <http://nuclearinfo.org>

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2010

NIS's finances remained in good health over the year thanks largely to the grant funding we received from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has kindly agreed to support our work for a further three years, and we intend to seek further funds from other sources.

<b>Income and Expenditure Account</b>					<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	2010 (£)	2009 (£)		2010 (£)	2009 (£)
<i>Incoming Resources</i>					<i>Current Assets</i>		
Grant from JRCT		29,775	29,775	41,929	Bank Accounts:		
Donations	169		169	601	Current	8,339	11,541
Payments for Services	541		541	1,178	Deposit	25,219	25,156
	710	29,775	30,485	43,708	Cash in Hand	85	
<i>Resources Expended</i>						<u>33,643</u>	<u>36,697</u>
Staff Costs	435	26,600	27,035	25,929	<i>Current Liabilities</i>		
Projects	49		49	10,615	Creditors	(9)	(18)
Other	79	6,402	6,481	8,640	Net Current Assets	<u>33,634</u>	<u>36,679</u>
	563	33,002	33,565	45,184	<i>Funds</i>		
Investment income	44		44	84	Unrestricted Funds	(277)	(459)
Taxation	(9)		(9)	(18)	Restricted Funds	33,911	37,138
Net Movement in Funds	182	(3,227)	(3,045)	(1,410)	Total Funds	<u>33,634</u>	<u>36,679</u>
Balances b/f at 1 January	(459)	37,138	36,679	38,089			
Balances c/f at 31 December	(277)	33,911	36,634	36,679			

NOTE: Restricted funds support NIS's public efforts and are supported through grant funding. Unrestricted funds are spent on broader campaign work.