

# 20 | ANNUAL REPORT

- Review of the year's activities
- Trident and AWE
- Financial statement
- Our year in numbers

## Chair's Report

2011 was another busy year for Nuclear Information Service, and I am pleased to report that we have continued to make good progress in our programmes for undertaking high quality research and advocacy work and for developing as an organisation.

Our core role remains the provision of information about the UK's nuclear weapons programme and safety issues at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), where nuclear warheads are designed and built. The political landscape relating to the UK's nuclear weapons remains fluid and there is still considerable uncertainty as to whether the government will be able to achieve its goal of 'like for like' replacement of Trident. During the year we reported on the Trident 'Initial Gate' announcement, the inquiry into the August 2010 fire at AWE, and the high costs of development at AWE. Interest in these and related topics was reflected in an increase in visits to our website and social media sites when compared to the previous year.



The Fukushima nuclear crisis also had a significant impact on our work during the year. Although the issue of nuclear power is beyond Nuclear Information Service's remit the disaster generated new openings for our work, most notably through an increased drive for openness and transparency within the nuclear sector driven by the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

Within the organisation we have made good progress on the development of a volunteer strategy to help increase our capacity, with valuable contributions made by Luke Stannard and Chris Burden, our two volunteers who have helped over the year alongside Steve Hendry and Peter Burt, our regular staff. During the year ahead we will be undertaking a strategic review of our work to help in setting our priorities as an organisation for the next 3 – 5 years.

Thank you to all our many supporters, and we look forward to another important year for disarmament in 2012.

Di McDonald  
Chair, Nuclear Information Service

## Review of the Year's Activities

### Monitoring The Atomic Weapons Establishment

As usual, much of our work during the year focused on the scrutiny of operations at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and its sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield where the UK's nuclear weapons are designed and made. We published a report on the conduct of the 'Aldex 10' AWE emergency exercise and had a fruitful meeting to discuss the report's findings with representatives of West Berkshire Council and the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

In June AWE published the report of an internal inquiry into a fire at an explosives processing facility which occurred in August 2010. We were able to alert the media to publication of the report and briefed local elected representatives on its findings and implications. A Freedom of Information Act request submitted by NIS also resulted in publication of the fire report for the incident prepared by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.



A major infrastructure upgrade programme is underway at both AWE sites, and although the costs of this programme amount to billions of pounds, the Ministry of Defence has been reluctant to publish the precise cost to the public purse. We worked alongside the 'Observer' newspaper to expose the full costs of a planned new uranium facility at Aldermaston and will be continuing with our research in this important area over the year ahead.

As a result of our evidence to West Berkshire Council's Eastern Area Planning Committee the Committee agreed to reconsult with the Office for Nuclear Regulation before renewing planning permission for the Conventional Manufacturing Rationalisation facility planning application at AWE Burghfield. We also commenced research projects on AWE's stakeholder engagement processes and waste management arrangements which will report in 2012.

## Trident And The UK Nuclear Weapons Programme

In May the government published the result of its 'Initial Gate' decision on the Trident replacement programme and announced its plans for the next stage of the project. NIS published a special briefing for opinion formers, the media, and campaign groups on the implications of the decision, highlighting the escalating costs of the programme. Uncertainties on the affordability of the programme and the possibility of Scottish independence have cast further doubt on the viability of replacing Trident, and we will be working alongside other civil society organisations to highlight the risks to the UK in proceeding with the programme.

During the year we lodged an appeal with the Information Tribunal about the Ministry of Defence's refusal to release papers about US involvement in the 'Project Pegasus' uranium processing facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment. Although the Tribunal eventually ruled against us, the appeal was successful in securing the release of large portions of the relevant documents from MoD, giving an insight into the secretive nature of US-UK co-operation on nuclear weapons.

Our expertise on the safety and risks of the nuclear weapons programme was widely recognised within the media and civil society. Work with the media on this topic resulted in the publication of two national news stories on high level concerns within the Defence Nuclear Environment and Safety Board about nuclear safety in the Ministry of Defence.

## Work with our partners

During the year NIS provided support and assistance to other non-government organisations with similar aims to ours – Nukewatch, the Nuclear Submarine Forum, Solent Coalition against Nuclear Ships, and the Reading-based Nuclear Awareness Group. These networks are important partners for NIS, as their reports of activity on the ground at nuclear bases and establishments provide valuable information in helping to establish the overall status of the UK's nuclear weapons programme.

The tracking of nuclear weapon movements by Nukewatch is one of the only independent ways that we have for verifying the size and distribution of the UK's nuclear arsenal. In 2011 Nukewatch monitored nuclear warhead convoy movements in April, July, September, and December. A number of training convoys and movements of special nuclear materials were also observed. NIS assisted Nukewatch in monitoring and reporting on convoy movements and preparing Freedom of Information requests about convoy arrangements.

We worked closely with the Nuclear Submarine Forum at the end of the year to encourage public input to the Ministry of Defence's Submarine Dismantling Consultation and prepared a briefing on the consultation arrangements on behalf of the Forum.

## Reaching out

Over the course of the year we have worked hard to develop links with our stakeholders, particularly regulators in the nuclear sector, and have been an active participant in the Office for Nuclear Regulation's NGO Forum. We submitted evidence to several government consultation programmes, including the review conducted by the Office for Nuclear Regulation into UK nuclear safety following the Fukushima nuclear emergency and consultation on options for dealing with the UK's plutonium stockpile.

We were invited to speak to a number of groups on the UK's nuclear weapons programme, including a fringe meeting at the annual Liberal Democrat party conference and at a seminar on UK – France nuclear cooperation organised by Abolition 2000.

## NIS's Year In Numbers

**35,998 Website page views**

**590 Email subscribers**

**400 Tweets**

**144 Facebook followers**

**109 Households surveyed for opinions on AWE communications**

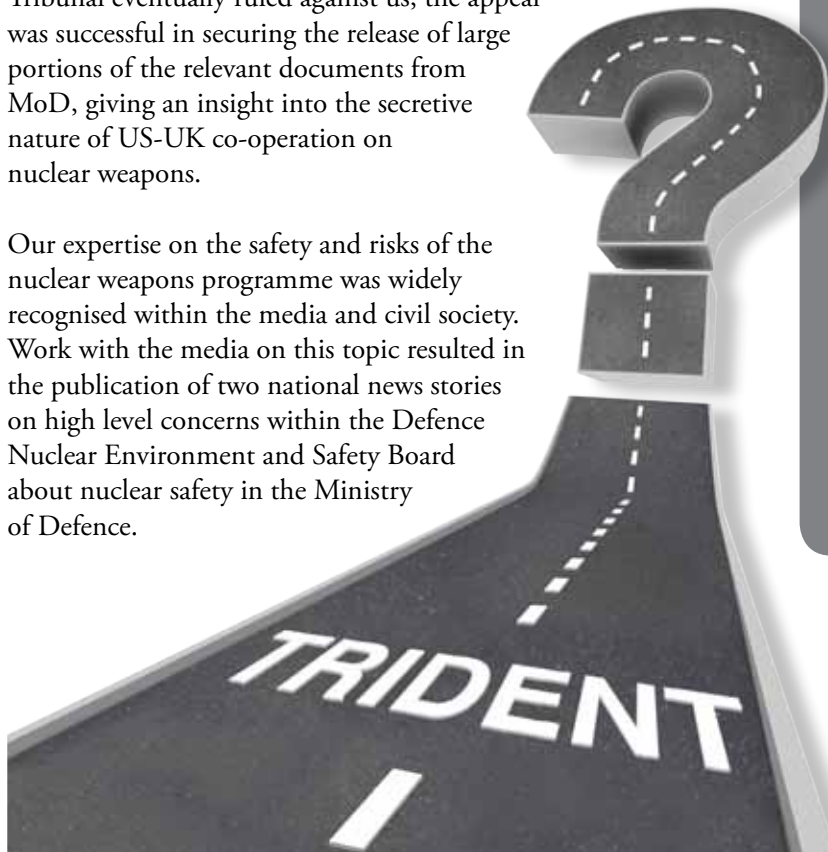
**33 Parliamentary Questions drafted in assistance to MPs**

**23 Freedom of Information requests**

**10 editions of our NIS Update regular newsletter and 2 special briefings**

**9 Blog postings**

**6 Presentations given to local groups**



## Financial Statement 2011

NIS's finances remained in good health over the year thanks largely to grant funding we received from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. The trust is supporting our work for a further two years and we have also been awarded grants by the Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation and the Marmot Trust.

### Income and Expenditure Account

	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2011	2010
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
Grant from JRCT	-	47,700	47,700	29,775
Grant from Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation	-	3,564	3,564	-
Grant from Marmot Trust	-	1,150	1,150	-
Donations	649	-	649	169
Payments for services	469	-	469	541
	<b>1,118</b>	<b>52,414</b>	<b>53,532</b>	30,485
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Staff costs	460	33,674	34,134	27,035
Projects	209	-	209	49
Other	9	14,970	14,979	6481
	<b>678</b>	<b>48,644</b>	<b>49,322</b>	33,565
Investment income	231	-	231	44
Taxation	(47)	-	(47)	(9)
Net movement in funds	<b>624</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>4,394</b>	(3,045)
Balances brought forward at 1 January	(277)	33,911	33,634	36,679
Balances carried forward at 31 December	<b>347</b>	<b>37,681</b>	<b>38,028</b>	33,634

### Balance Sheet

	£	£
	2011	2010
<b>Current assets</b>		
Bank accounts - current	17,907	8,339
Bank accounts - deposit	30,080	25,219
Cash in hand	113	85
	<b>48,100</b>	33,643
Debtors	-	-
	<b>48,100</b>	33,643
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accruals	(10,025)	-
Creditors	(47)	(9)
Net current assets	<b>38,028</b>	33,634
<b>Funds</b>		
Unrestricted funds	347	(277)
Restricted funds	37,681	33,911
Total funds	<b>38,028</b>	33,634

Note: Restricted funds support NIS's educational goals and are supported through grant funding. Unrestricted funds are spent on broader campaign work.

Nuclear Information Service 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.

We are grateful for the generous support extended to us by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust in providing our core funding, and to the Marmot Trust and the Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation who provided funding for project work.

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>.



<http://nuclearinfo.org>



<http://blt.ly/ddXmsZ>



[twitter.com/nuclearinfo](https://twitter.com/nuclearinfo)



[info@nuclearinfo.org](mailto:info@nuclearinfo.org)

**Nuclear Information Service**  
Ibex House  
85 Southampton Street  
Reading  
RG1 2QU

01189 327 7489

Company Number 4063238