

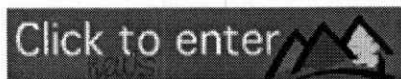
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Thursday, January 18, 2001

## MEMORANDUM FROM THE NUCLEAR SAFETY ADVISORY PANEL

### 5TH PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEFECT REPAIRS TO HMS TIRELESS

Dear Chief Minister

The Panel met with MoD at the Derby works of Rolls Royce Marine Associates (RRMA) on 10 January 2001 to discuss progress of the repair scheme overall and to review practical aspects of the welding trials undertaken at RRMA Derby:

#### 1) Safety Validation - Welding Leg

The Panel was able to consider in detail the 'welding' leg of CNNRP's three-part safety validation process. The Panel has now accessed most of the welding information assessment and its knowledge. bar a few interrogatory details from CNNRP, should be complete at its next meeting with MoD/RRMA (19 January)

#### 2) Remaining Safety Validation Legs - Diagnostics and Analysis

The full cases for the other two legs are to be made available to us on 19 January at Rolls Royce, that is just a few days ahead of MoD's scheduled commencement of the welding repairs to Tireless on or about 22 January 2001

#### 3) Position of the Trial Repair to HMS Torbay at Devonport

The one-third weld fill trial of Torbay is not scheduled to commence until 12/13 January for completion about 18/19 January, thereafter the full non-destructive examination (NDE) for weld will take place.

The Panel considers there to remain a number of uncertainties relating to the welding activity and its NDE which do not provide it with sufficient confidence that the repair will be ultimately successful.

The Panel has indicated to CNNRP that to improve its confidence in the welding and

improve its confidence in the welding and the repair scheme overall it requires further detailed information, including:-

the diagnostics and analysis for the previous failure and proposed repair geometry, particularly the metallurgical and fracture mechanics models adopted for the latter, including extrapolation of the Torbay part weld result to the Tireless situation;

o full disclosure of the workshop Benchmark or Reference and Torbay weld NDE signatures for comparison with the Tireless NDE once this is available;

o further details relating to the welding, including the means for fully monitoring the welding parameters and for ensuring full side wall fusion;

o evidence of the success of the Torbay one-third fill weld (co-planarity of pipe., fitting and weld, and NDE);

o evidence that the weld underside dressing technique has been fully developed and proven capable of achieving the required surface geometry, co-planarity and finish; and

o that a sufficient number of welders, fitters and site supervisors have qualified for the weld activity on board Tireless, which the Panel believes to be greater than those numbers qualified at present (10 January).

The Panel also seeks assurance that MoD's own internal checking, validation and approval procedures are in place before the weld activity commences, including evidence that the following bodies have reported before the repair proceeds beyond Hold Point A:-

- o INSA Independent Nuclear Safety Assessment
- o SWP Safety Working Party
- o RPSC Reactor Plant Safety Committee
- o CNNRP Overall Approval, including RRMA prepared Nuclear Safety Case

Once that the Panel is in receipt of this information it will need some time, about 5 to 6 weeks, to compile its report and recommendations to the Government of Gibraltar. It is intended that this substantive report cover all activities and preparations up to the departure of Tireless from Gibraltar. The Panel is to have the substantive report completed before the hydro testing of the reactor plant circuit at Hold Point C which, if the repairs remain on

Hold Point C which, if the repairs remain on schedule, takes place in late March. Hydro testing is the next stage of the overall reactor repair programme for which the Panel identifies the potential for a significant risk to arise.

However, the Panel will express the degree of its confidence in the repair scheme in an interim report once that it has received and considered the above information following its next meeting with MoD (19 January). The Panel requires a full working week to prepare this interim report

The Panel recommends:  
The Government of Gibraltar accept two stages of reporting from the Panel comprising:

a) an Interim Report submitted on or about Friday 26 January following which it may wish to review its policy so as not to object to the repairs proceeding past Hold Point A through to but not including and beyond the hydro testing of Hold Point C;

b) a Substantive Report which will enable it to consider Government of Gibraltar policy relating to the Tireless programme proceeding past Hold Point C through to reactor start-up, commissioning and operation.

Unless directed otherwise, the Panel will adopt the above reporting strategy and proceed with the MoD/RRMA meeting of 19 January, thereafter issuing the Interim Report on or about 26 January 2001.

P H Davidson

J H Large

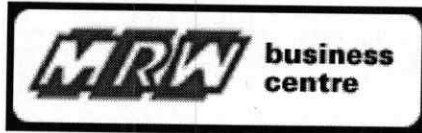
CJ Milloy

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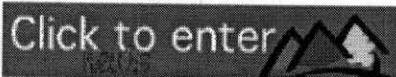
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## FULL GOVERNEMENT STATEMENT ON REPAIRS

On Tuesday the Government received the report of its Panel of Nuclear experts following the meeting held by them with MOD at the Rolls Royce Marine Associates works in Derby on 10th January

The Panel's (5 Progress) Report is attached to this statement.

The Panel is not yet in a position to report to the Government on the whole of the repair process. Nor will the Panel be in a position to report on the whole of the repair process by 22nd January, the date on which the MOD has indicated that it would like to start the repairs. The Panel say that they need until 26th January to report on the whole repair process.

The reason why the Panel will not be in a position to report on the full repair process by 22 January is that there remain documents and information to be provided to them by the MOD. This is due to be provided at a further meeting tomorrow (19th January). In the absence of this further information and documents there remain a number of uncertainties relating to the weld activity and its non-destructive examination (NDE) which do not at this stage provide the Panel with sufficient confidence that the repair will be ultimately successful.

In the circumstances the MOD have requested whether the Panel would be able to consider and report upon only a limited part of the welding process (known as the "one third weld fill") and to report to the Gibraltar Government on that limited part of the repair process sooner than 26th January. The Panel have agreed to this request on certain conditions. These have been agreed to by the MOD.

The Government's well known position is that it will oppose, and take such steps as it can to prevent, the carrying out of works prior to the advice of the Government's Panel's, or if, based on such advice, the Government is opposed to the works being carried out.

carried out.

The Government has accordingly sought an assurance from the MOD that it will not carry out any works until the Panel has reported to the Gibraltar Government on those works and the Government has been able to formulate its position in relation thereto.

The assurance requested from the MOD has been received this morning following three telephone discussions yesterday evening and this morning between the Chief Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Geoffrey Hoon MP. Repairs will accordingly not begin on Monday 22nd January.

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