

Call to scrap H submarine 15/6/96 berths

GREENPEACE wants secret nuclear submarine berths — most of which are in Scotland — scrapped because of the risk of radiation following leaked information on the sites.

In addition, a Scots MP wants the Navy to reveal how often they are used and what monitoring for nuclear discharges is carried out.

The Royal Navy refused to disclose the list of the "Z berths" — which are used by nuclear submarines in an emergency. However, details have leaked out.

Of the 40 berths, mainly in remote deep water locations — 30 are in Scotland.

They are at Brodick Bay, in Arran; Campbelltown (four berths), Coulport, two berths; Glen Mallan, Lamlash Bay, Loch Fyne (three berths), Loch Goll, Loch Striven, Rothesay (two berths), Loch Ewe (two berths), Skye (four berths), Thurso Bay, Shetland (five berths), Dalgety Bay, and the Firth of Forth.

In England, berths have been set aside at Barrow-in-Furness, Liverpool, Portsmouth, Portland, Plymouth, Torbay and Southampton, while in Wales there are two — at Cardiff and Barry. There is also one overseas berth, at Gibraltar.

Liberal Democrat MP Charles Kennedy, who was unaware that his Skye constituency had been designated an emerbase, is now writing to the MoD asking how often the berths are used and if independent monitoring for radioactive leakage is carried out.

Mr Kennedy said: "Scotland has been denied a proper share of the economic benefits of these submarines, but gets the lion's share of the risks.

"Rosyth was not given the refitting work for nuclear submarines, but Scotland gets the potentially-damaging distress berths. They should be subject to normal planning procedures so that local communities can have a say."

Greenpeace says it is worried about the risk to the environment from submarines which have developed problems using the berths.