

Atomic Weapons Establishment

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies are being carried out on future warhead options by officials at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [78962]

Des Browne: There is no programme to develop a new UK nuclear warhead. As was stated in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review, we retain a minimum capability to design and manufacture a new warhead,

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should one be required. Work by officials is now underway to prepare for decisions on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent and also to keep options open in advance of these decisions. It remains the case that no decisions have yet been taken.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are for the construction of an additional tritium facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [76767]

Des Browne: There are currently no plans to construct an additional tritium facility at AWE. Essential refurbishment and replacement of existing facilities is planned as part of the site investment programme announced by my predecessor on 19 July 2005.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are for the construction of a new facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston to make highly enriched uranium warhead components. [76768]

Des Browne: A number of options are under consideration for ensuring we retain the requisite capability. No decisions have yet been taken. The capability to manufacture highly enriched uranium is required in order to maintain the existing Trident warhead throughout its intended in-service life and to provide material for naval propulsion.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the A91 building at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [76773]

Des Browne: Plans for building A91 have not yet been formulated.