

PROBLEMS WITH THE CLYDE AREA PUBLIC SAFETY SCHEME (CLYDEPUBSAFE)

Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 18 November 1997

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Accident scenarios are unrealistic

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ClydePubSafe fails to discuss the possibility of sinking, grounding, collision and fire - all of which can result in a catastrophic failure of the submarine hull and a massive release of radioactivity.

The Royal Navy refuse to discuss any accident scenario occurring outside the fixed submarine berths in existence. A collision in the Clyde that resulted in a breach of the submarine hull could lead to even larger populations being at risk in areas where little or no emergency plans are in place.

Public protection measures are unworkable in any accident scenario

Within ClydePubSafe there is insufficient consideration of how the public would react in a real accident situation. The automatic reaction of the majority of the public upon hearing that a nuclear reactor accident has occurred would be one of bewilderment and panic. Whilst it may look good on paper to advise people to take shelter and sit tight the automatic reaction would be to collect up the family and to run away from the area (known as shadow evacuation). This would result in large scale traffic control problems which could delay any emergency service response.

The local phone service would become inundated with relatives phoning in and out of the area to check on how their friends and family are.

The fear of radiation would cause panic all over Scotland despite any reassurances that may come from official sources.

Potassium Iodate tablet distribution would be, at best, problematic

ClydePubSafe envisages groups of volunteers gathering at local GP offices if it is felt necessary to distribute this countermeasure to the general public.

Dressed in full protective clothing these volunteers will be the first authority figure many people will meet face to face.

Who are these volunteers? Will they be adequately trained and informed to answer all the questions and concern people may have about their own health and safety.

The public are inadequately informed

The public are inadequately informed of what to do in the event of an accident - past practice was to release an information booklet in 1993 about what to do. This booklet has not yet been updated and distributed.

How many people still have this booklet to hand? How many people actually read it? The public should be continually updated and reminded of the accident response procedures they may have to undertake. This could be done in conjunction with the distribution of public telephone books, for example.

Distances that radioactivity would spread are questionable

The distance which radioactivity from an accident would spread are extremely hypothetical. The spread of radioactivity depends on a number of factors such as the scale and severity of the accident, the wind speed and other highly variable weather conditions such as whether or not it is raining. As the accident at Chernobyl showed radioactivity can spread great distances.

In one Royal Navy training document radiation monitoring would occur initially out to 30 kilometres downwind of any accident site, yet there is no public pre-planning beyond 10 kilometres. What would happen if an accident was so severe that countermeasures to protect the public were required beyond the 10 kilometre zone.



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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MONDAY 17TH NOVEMBER

From Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

To Newsdesk

NUCLEAR SUBMARINE ACCIDENT REVEALED ON EVE OF EMERGENCY EXERCISE..

On the eve of the navy's largest ever nuclear accident emergency exercise the Ministry of Defence faced embarrassment as details emerged of a real radioactive incident on a nuclear submarine in the North Atlantic almost two weeks ago.

The accident exercise is taking place tomorrow (18th November) at the Faslane submarine base in Scotland and will be attended by Armed Forces Minister John Reid and monitored from Downing Street by the Prime Minister.

The exercise is supposed to simulate the responses of the navy, local council and accident and emergency services in event of a limited nuclear accident at the base. It will include evacuation of the base, establishment of an emergency headquarters and local radiation monitoring.

With timing that will embarrass the MoD details emerged yesterday of a real incident two weeks ago. The incident took place around 6th November in the North Atlantic as HMS Turbulent undertook post refit trials. Details are still unclear but it is believed that the submarine's radioactive reactor coolant started leaking. The submarine then returned to its Devonport base in Plymouth where the leak was brought under control..

The Plymouth Sunday Independent reported that over 130 sailors had to undergo emergency tests when the submarine returned to Devonport.

"This incident shows that contrary to what the MoD is always telling us accidents do occur on nuclear submarines. It also shows the typical MoD reaction to a nuclear incident - hushing up details and not informing the local population" said John Ainslie of Scottish CND.

CND observers have been monitoring the build up to the emergency exercise and will be running an alternative incident room throughout the exercise. Their team of observers will be monitoring and analysing the MoD, council and emergency services responses and... providing regular updates on what is really going on.

John Ainslie explained, "Already flaws are emerging in the exercise. For a start they have been preparing for it for almost a year - hardly a real scenario. Then today one day before the exercise begins there are additional police on site, additional communications being put in place and even the setting up of dozens of portaloos.

ENDS/

EDITORS NOTES FOLLOW ON NEXT PAGE.

CND will be holding an initial press briefing at 11am at Faslane Peace Camp.



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Nuclear Submarine Accident Revealed on Eve of Emergency Exercise- page 2 of 2.

CND will be issuing a release outlining the findings of their team of observers during the exercise tomorrow. Please contact us if you want to be faxed information.

The press office can be contacted throughout the day on mobile number 0973 773671 or via bleeper number 0336 724404. Alternatively 01436 820901 (Peace Camp), 0836 597569 (mobile), 0378 267833 (mobile), 01436 679194 (Jane Tallents)

There will be opportunities to film or photograph the following on Tuesday:

- (1) The submarine on which the accident is supposed to be taking place and emergency services response at the scene. It should be possible to film this from two locations- 500m and 1.2km away.
- (2) The evacuation of 4,000 service personnel and civilians from the base. This could be filmed from the gate.
- (3) Teams of sailors measuring radiation in the countryside and villages nearby. the sailors should be wearing protective clothing. Scottish CND will be using a number of vehicles to follow the monitoring landrovers to find out where they are going.
- (4) CND protest with banners.
- (5) Other opportunity pictures depending on how the situation develops.

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P - Police forward control point
 R - Rendezvous point for emergency services
 M - Monitoring station.
 V. - Viewpoints to see submarine berths.

KILCREGGAN

INFORMATION

Clyde Off-Site Centre and Media Reception Centre, RHU

Large building, car park and jetty with perimeter fence on shore side between the Ardencaple Hotel and the Rhu Marina.

Nearest phones, public phone in Rhu, or payphone in lobby of Ardencaple Hotel or at Dock Masters office at Rhu marina

VIEWPOINTS

V1 - through fence, just South of Glen Fruin Road turning. Good view of 10 berth, partial view 12 berth

V2 - Turn off main road alongside Faslane sign-posted Glen Fruin, under railway bridge, up winding road through trees. Several good views of 12 berth from above tree line.

V3 - Take turning off roundabout opposite Faslane North gate. Up the hill, pull in on left on bridge just before turning to Garelochhead Army Camp. Good view of 11 berth.

V4 - Pass sign for entering Mambeg, pull in at distinctive dry stone wall on left. Good view across loch to 11 berth.

V5 - After Mambeg, crash barrier on left, round left hand bend, pull in immediately to lat-by on left with big oak tree in middle. Good view across loch to berths 1 to 9.

V6 - Turn up Glen Fruin Haul Rd (Roundabout between North gate and Whistlefield) Pass picnic area on left, over the brow of the hill pull in on cobbles on right. Climb over stile on fence on left, up bank for end on view of 11 and 12 berths

M - Radiation Monitoring Stations which automatically send information back to Faslane

Public phones in Rhu, Garelochhead, Whistlefield and Clynder

Fire stations Helensburgh, Garelochhead and Cove as well as Defence Fire Brigade inside Faslane

Police Forward Control Points

P1 Blairvadach Outdoor Centre

P2 Garelochhead Police Station

Rendezvous Points for Emergency Services

R1 Kidston Car Park

R2 Picnic site, just south of Whistlefield roundabout

also rendezvous point at Arrochar, off map

Monitoring Stations

Three marked on map opposite Faslane. Automatically sends radiation readings back to the base

