

Rifkind hits out in nuclear secrets row

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By Severin Carrell

AN ANGRY row yesterday enveloped Malcolm Rifkind, the Defence Secretary, after the Ministry of Defence was accused of withholding information on the consequences of a serious nuclear submarine accident in Scotland.

Mr Rifkind dismissed statements by three Scottish emergency planning directors that alarming nuclear accident studies had not been given to them, as disclosed in *The Scotsman* yesterday.

Mr Rifkind claimed that all local authority emergency planners had been given the restricted manuals containing the studies at a specialist course at Greenwich naval

theoretical concept."

He was speaking after he unveiled part of the £1.7 billion Trident submarine complex at Faslane, including a 16,000-tonne submarine shiplift and Trident berthing jetty. One protester was arrested after demonstrations by anti-nuclear groups outside.

In spite of a £650 million cost overrun, Mr Rifkind said the facility was "by any standards one of the great engineering achievements this country, or the world, has seen in recent years."

Three regional councils yesterday restated that they had never received any information to suggest that contamination could spread beyond 10 kilometres. But confidential documents said that in a worst case scenario people within a radius of 100 kilometres could be affected.

Phil Harris, Lothian's emergency planner, said: "I had never been shown that document. What the minister seems to be suggesting is that there is some collusion to forget everything among local authorities. As far as I'm concerned, that is certainly not the case."

John McVicar, at Strathclyde, said it was not the Government's right to withhold such information. Even though the chances of a catastrophic accident were assessed by experts as one per million years of reactor operation, planners had a clear right and duty to be aware of any potential risk.

Alasdair Morgan, the Scottish National Party's defence spokesman, said: "The Westminster Government is exposing Scots to the threat of radiation, but clearly does not think us important enough to be told."

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Worst accident could affect Row as secret nuclear fears are revealed

By Severin Carrell

NUCLEAR authorities in Glasgow today admitted that they had not given a full account of the possible consequences of a serious nuclear submarine accident in Scotland to local authority emergency planners. The Scottish emergency planning directors, who met yesterday, said that they had been told that the manuals containing the studies at a specialist course at Greenwich naval

EXCLUSIVE
Although the Royal Navy has admitted the likelihood of such an accident as one in a million, a report of a nuclear submarine accident could have a far-reaching effect on the country's emergency planning. It is a report which is being kept secret by the Government. It is a report which is being kept secret by the Government. It is a report which is being kept secret by the Government.

DEPARTMENT OF
NUCLEAR ENERGY
AND TECHNOLOGY
RESTRICTED

Anatomy of a worst case

Yesterday's exclusive report in *The Scotsman*

college. They predict that a catastrophic nuclear submarine accident could put 60 per cent of Scotland's population at risk.

He attacked articles in *The Scotsman* detailing the manual's contents, and the allegations of the regional emergency planning officers for Strathclyde, Fife and Lothian, as "silly, sensationalist and rather over-the-top."

Mr Rifkind added: "I'm not frankly very impressed, there was nothing secret about it. It was handed to emergency planning officials as well as others ... It's a purely