

Hansard 5/5/89

Z-berths

Ms. Gordon : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the purpose of a Z-berth ; if Z-berths have permanent safety precautions against radiological hazards ; and if he will publish in the Official Report the locations of all the Z-berths in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Archie Hamilton : A Z-berth is a berth designated for occasional operational or recreational visits by nuclear-powered warships. Its safety arrangements will include a public safety scheme prepared after discussion with the local authorities and civil emergency services, which will provide for a Royal Naval incident commander and a naval emergency monitoring team in the area to stand by throughout any such visit to respond to an emergency. The monitoring team has access to a supply of potassium iodate tablets, and carries out monitoring during the visit.

The United Kingdom Z-berths are at Barrow-in-Furness, Barry, Brodick bay, Campbeltown, Cardiff, Cullinstown and Loch Long, Devonport and Plymouth Sound, Faslane, the Firth of Forth, Glen Mallan, Lamlash bay, Lerwick and the Shetland isles, Liverpool, Loch Ewe, Loch Fyne, Loch Goil, Loch Striven, Portland, Portree, Portsmouth, Raasay (Broadford bay), Rosyth, Rothesay, Southampton, Spithead, Thurso bay and Torbay.

Ms. Gordon : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many meetings there have been between his Department and local and port authorities concerning the possible locating of a Z-berth at Tilbury ; when a decision is expected ; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Archie Hamilton : As I said in my answer to the hon. Member for Clwyd, South-West (Mr. Jones) on 9 March 1989 at column 677, my officials have had preliminary discussions with port and local authorities about visits to Tilbury by Royal Navy ships, including nuclear-powered submarines. This remains the position. It would be premature to anticipate the outcome of these discussions at this stage.

X-berths

Ms. Gordon : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the purpose of an X-berth ; if X-berths have permanent safety precautions against radiological hazards ; and if he will publish in the Official Report the locations of all the X-berths in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Archie Hamilton : An X-berth is a berth designated for frequent and regular use by nuclear-powered warships, or a berth in a dockyard or naval base which is suitable for the building, refit, repair or maintenance of nuclear-powered warships. All X-berths have as an integral part of their safety arrangements a permanent health physics department, a local emergency monitoring organisation and a local safety plan prepared under the auspices of a local liaison committee. The United Kingdom X-berths are at Barrow-in-Furness, Devonport, Faslane and Rosyth.

2/6/92

Mr. Llew Smith : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the current ports allocated to Z-berths for nuclear submarines ; and if he has any plans to alter the list in the future.

Mr. Archie Hamilton : Within the United Kingdom there are Z-berths, including buoys and anchorages, at the following locations : Barrow-in- Furness, Barry, Broadford Bay, Brodick Bay, Campbeltown, Cardiff, Coulport, Dales Voe, Dalgety Bay, Devonport and Plymouth Sound, Faslane, the Firth of Forth, Glen Mallan, Holy Loch, Lamlash Bay, Lerwick, Liverpool, Loch Ewe, Loch Fyne, Loch Goil, Loch na Beiste, Loch Striven, Loch Torridon, Portland, Portree, Portsmouth, Raasay, Rosyth, Rothesay, Southampton, Spithead, Thurso Bay and Torbay.

In addition, we have decided to establish a Z-berth at Swansea. The operational requirements for Z-berths are under continuous review but there are no current plans to alter this list.

20/5/94

Submarines (Radiation Emergencies)

Mrs. Helen Jackson : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what instructions concerning radiation emergency procedures were issued or will be issued to local residents near submarine berths in (a) Glenmallen, (b) Portree, (c) Loch Goil, (d) Campbeltown, (e) Loch Ewe and (f) the Shetlands ;

(2) when leaflets on what to do in a radiation emergency were issued or will be issued to local residents near submarine berths in Glenmallen, Portree, Lochgoil, Campbeltown, Loch Ewe and the Shetlands ; if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley : A booklet entitled "What to do in a Radiation Emergency", containing advice in accordance with the Public Information for Radiation Emergencies Regulations 1992, has been prepared for issue to those residents living within 550 m of such submarine berths.

This booklet was issued to residents living within 550 m of the berths at Loch Goil in June 1993 and at Campbeltown in January 1994, in co-operation with the local authority. Arrangements are currently in hand to issue booklets to residents living within the same distance of the berth at Glenmallen and the Shetland berth at Lerwick. No residents live within 550 m of the other berths listed. All of the berths in question are visited only infrequently.

Mr. Cohen : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the distance within which leaflets on what to do in a radiation emergency have been or will be issued to local residents near berths at the Clyde Submarine Base, Faslane and near submarine berths at Glenmallan, Portree, Loch Goil, Campbeltown, Loch Ewe and the Shetlands ; and if he will make a statement.

Column 602

Mr. Hanley : Booklets containing this advice have been, or will be, issued to residents living within 2,000 m at Faslane, where nuclear repairs take place, and 550 m at the other locations, which are only infrequently visited and where nuclear repairs are not undertaken.

Mr. Cohen : To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the X and Z berths which may be used by nuclear-powered submarines at which leaflets to local residents as to what to do in a radiation emergency (a) have been issued, (b) will be issued in the near future and (c) are not planned to be issued.

Mr. Hanley : Booklets have been issued to local residents as to what to do in the unlikely event of a radiation emergency at the X-berths at Barrow-in-Furness, Devonport, Faslane and Rosyth and at the Z-berths at Campbeltown and Loch Goil. Arrangements are in hand to issue booklets to residents living within 550 m of the berths at Glen Mallan, Holy Loch and Lerwick in the event of a planned nuclear powered warship visit. There are no plans to issue leaflets to local residents at other Z-berths since no one resides within 550 m of the berth and there is therefore no requirement for issue.

9/11/98

Gibraltar

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many submarines of (a) the Royal Navy, (b) the US Navy and (c) other navies have docked at the Z-berth at Gibraltar during 1998. [58750]

Mr. Doug Henderson: The information requested is as follows: as at 1 November, 2 Royal Navy and 9 US Navy submarines had used the Z berths in Gibraltar during 1998. A number of US Navy submarines have visited Gibraltar on more than one occasion and in total they have made 15 visits this year. No submarines from other navies have docked at the Gibraltar Z berths during this period.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list by month and name the Royal Navy vessels which have visited Gibraltar during 1998. [58751]

Mr. Doug Henderson: The following Royal Navy vessels have visited Gibraltar during 1998, up to and including 1 November:

In addition, two Royal Navy submarines have visited Gibraltar during this period. They were the Swiftshure class submarine, HMS Spartan, in January and HMS Turbulent (Trafalgar class) in November