

- c) Disposal of Nuclear Waste - Humberside County Council (see para 4.10 below).

The NSC wishes to place on record its thanks to these authorities for the work that has been started on these issues.

3. CIVIL DEFENCE

- 3.1 Once more the civil defence issue has continued to be a high priority for the NSC in a year which has seen the Home Office's 'Planned Programme of Implementation' get into full swing. Considerable staff time and effort has been spent preparing guidance and briefing material for authorities on this matter.

The PPI

- 3.2 Two PPI target dates have passed since the last AGM. For the October 1987 target date, the Home Office asked county-level authorities to "provide basic information on the objectives of all plans and the organisation required to achieve them". For the April 1988 target date, the Home Office asked for evidence of progress in the preparation of detailed operational plans on: the collection and distribution of information on the results of attack; control and co-ordination of action; and advice to the public. In response, the NSC has issued a series of PPI Guidance Papers to enable supporting authorities to adopt an approach of 'critical compliance':

No.3: 'The Planned Programme for Implementation: Analysis of Progress and Preparation for the April 1st Target Date', October 1987

No.4: 'Public Information Initiatives', January 1988

No.5: Part A - 'The Designation of Staff for Civil Defence Roles'

Part B - 'The Basis for Extended Consultation', February 1988

No.6: 'Public Information Initiatives: October 1st, 1988 PPI Target Date', July 1988

No.7: 'A Guidance Note for District Councils Regarding Consultation with County-Level Authorities', September 1988

- 3.3 NSC PPI Guidance Paper No.3 provided an analysis of the October 1987 PPI submissions from a number of supporting county-level authorities. It also drew on discussions at the Counties, Metropolitan Districts and Shire Districts Forums. The intention in providing this analysis was for supporting county-level authorities to utilise it when reviewing and revising their October 1987 PPI submissions, and for Districts to use it when consulted on the substance of plans by their county-level authorities. The NSC advised that Districts should insist on consultation during the plan-making process. PPI Guidance Paper No.3 also provided detailed guidance on the civil defence work that needed to be carried out prior to the April 1988 target date. It set out the steps that county-level authorities are advised to follow when preparing detailed operational plans, and the steps that Districts are advised to take when involved by their county-level authority in the plan-making process and when considering the duty to establish, equip and maintain an emergency centre.

3.4 One of the key principles of 'critical compliance' is to open up civil defence to public scrutiny. The NSC has stressed that an authority's approach to civil defence will not be credible unless it is conducted in the open. NSC PPI Guidance Papers 4 and 6 were produced to encourage supporting authorities to make information available to the public. Guidance Paper No.6 describes possible initiatives for the October 1988 PPI target date, and includes ideas for press releases or letters to newspapers.

3.5 NSC PPI Guidance Paper No.5 dealt with two specific matters raised by the PPI process. Part A of the paper considered the question of "designating" staff to civil defence roles. It considered the definition of designation, its statutory basis and whether staff are obliged to agree to designation. Authorities' attention was drawn to the fact that there is no obligation on local authority staff to agree to being designated to civil defence roles. A process for consulting with staff members about accepting designated key wartime posts was also proposed.

3.6 In addition, the NSC advised in the April 1988 Bulletin (No.6) that in view of:

- i) the potentially large number of local authority staff that could be involved in drawing up civil defence plans;
- ii) the fact that there is no obligation on local authority staff to agree to being involved in civil defence; and
- iii) the fact that most local government trade unions have a policy in opposition to civil defence;

that supporting authorities consult fully with trade unions on the issue of staff involvement in civil defence and give an absolute assurance that no employee will be disciplined, prejudiced or disadvantaged in any way as a result of refusing to take part in civil defence work, or refusing to accept any changes to his/her duties which have civil defence implications.

3.7 Part B of NSC Guidance Paper No.5 considered the basis for extended consultation during the plan-making process. This guidance was requested by the Counties Forum in order to promote the widest possible consultation with other local authorities, community and voluntary groups and the public. Supporting authorities were urged to pursue these proposals. One good example of consultation involved Derbyshire CC and South Yorkshire FCDA. They considered the question of evacuation from a metropolitan to a shire area in time of war. Derbyshire and SYFCDA held a joint meeting to assess the problems which might result from the anticipated movement of refugees in a period of international tension, so that the two authorities' plans could be co-ordinated as far as practicable. The meeting attracted considerable interest and was well reported in the local press.

3.8 NSC PPI Guidance Paper No.7 provides guidance for Districts to assist in the task of analysing plans when consulted by their county-level authority. It is anticipated that further guidance papers will be available at the AGM, including:

No.8: Consolidated Guidance on the Question of Key Wartime Post Designations

No.9: Guidance on District Councils and Civil Defence Grant

No.10 Guidance on Competitive Tendering and Civil Defence

- 3.9 During the year various Forums have held seminars and briefings on the PPI and 'critical compliance'. On December 4th, the Counties Forum held a seminar in the County Offices of Derbyshire CC. On January 15th, the Metropolitan Districts Forum held a Briefing Session in City Hall, Bradford. The Non-Metropolitan Districts Forum also considered the results of a questionnaire concerning the extent and nature of district involvement in civil defence as a result of county-level authority requests.
- 3.10 The NSC has ensured that information about its approach to civil defence is regularly sent to the relevant national trade unions. It is understood that NALGO are shortly to issue an advice note to branches, which will draw on the Guidance Papers made available by the NSC.
- 3.11 Finally, in July the Home Office wrote to County Councils and five FCDAs informing them of a provisional across the board reduction of 13.25% in all 1988/89 budget headings eligible of 100% civil defence grant. Because nearly 4 months of the financial year had passed, the real position was worse. The NSC expressed its concern at this development : on the one hand Central Government had put into effect a strict monitoring regime (the PPI), and on the other it had cut the finances necessary for authorities to achieve the targets in that regime. It was argued that the cuts would reduce authorities' effectiveness in discharging their civil defence obligations and raise the very real possibility of staffing cuts. The NSC encouraged supporting authorities to pursue the matter through their authority associations. On August 19th, Counties and FCDAs received letters from the Home Office informing them that the cuts would not after all be made, as the Home Office had been able to find additional resources from elsewhere in the overall civil defence budget.

PA Studies

- 3.12 At the time of writing there are six studies underway which are utilising NSC resource materials; three more are due to start shortly; and there are three other possible studies. These studies are:
- a) - PA Studies Underway : there are well developed studies in Derbyshire, East and Central Scotland, London, the North West, Strathclyde and South Yorkshire. All these studies are scheduled to finish in the period September-November 1989.
 - b) PA Studies to Begin Shortly : studies are soon to begin in East Anglia, Herts and Essex, and in the West Midlands. The Herts and Essex Study Co-ordinator took up his post on September 1st.
 - c) Other Possible PA Studies : some form of PA Studies may be possible in South Glamorgan, West Yorkshire and the East Midlands.
 - d) Further PA Studies : in addition to the PA Studies referred to above, there are a number of smaller scale studies which are not using NSC resource materials.

- 3.13 In the November 1987 issue of the Bulletin, the NSC reported that the supplementary opinion from Leading Counsel concerning District participation in PA research had been received. Counsel took the view that the model terms of reference provided by the NSC form an admirable basic guide for a District wishing to participate in research in relation to its obligation to establish, equip and maintain an emergency centre. A reduced package of national PA Study resources for District only Studies was also made available at this time.
- 3.14 Towards the end of 1987, Shaun Gregory also initiated two other developments for authorities involved in PA Studies:
- a) the production of a national PA Study newsletter to ensure an exchange of information;
 - b) a series of workshops for Study Co-ordinators to review progress, and discuss problems and developments.

'Civil Protection'

- 3.15 Authorities will recall that in December 1986, the Home Office launched an attempt to improve the image of civil defence under the guise of 'Civil Protection'. This public relations exercise sought to promote the so-called all-hazards approach to emergency planning. The NSC prepared a series of materials in response, including a detailed briefing, speaker's notes for use when showing the Home Office video and a counter-leaflet. Free artwork for the leaflet was made available to supporting authorities in September 1987.
- 3.16 In the February 1988 issue of the Bulletin, the NSC reported that attempts were also being made to sell the 'all hazards' approach to disaster planning in the National Health Service. This approach takes as its model the structures and procedures utilised in war planning and attempts to argue its relevance to peacetime emergency planning. A detailed NSC Guidance Paper was sent to supporting authorities arguing that if the NHS wants to develop more effective peacetime plans it should decouple peacetime and wartime planning. The report encouraged supporting authorities to raise the issue with District Health Authorities.

New Zealand Nuclear Impacts Study

- 3.17 In May the NSC's attention was drawn to the publication of the first phase of the New Zealand Nuclear Impacts Study. The New Zealand Government has not yet decided if it will fund a Phase II Study. The Nuclear Impacts Study Team is recommending that Phase II consider public education, contingency planning and ways of further reducing New Zealand's vulnerability. The NSC agreed that from the international perspective it is important that the Phase II Study should go ahead because of the contribution it will make to knowledge about civil defence in a non-nuclear weapons state. The NSC therefore wrote to the New Zealand Government expressing its support for the Phase II Study as recommended by the Study Team. The Study was also drawn to the attention of the Organising Committee of the Fourth International NFZ Conference for incorporation into the Conference programme.

Overview

3.18 In the Secretary's report to last year's AGM, it was argued that the PPI provides the stick, and the 'Civil Protection' package the carrot in terms of tackling recalcitrant local authorities. In response to the stick of the PPI, the NSC has developed the approach of 'critical compliance' with five guiding principles: (A)
(C)

- (1) that elected members exercise full control over civil defence matters;
- (5) that an authority's involvement in civil defence takes full account of the reality of hostile attack; *
- (2) that an authority consults fully and properly with staff about civil defence roles;
- (3) that an authority properly informs its public about the implementation of its civil defence duties;
- (4) that an authority communicates to Government any misgivings as to current practices that may emerge and any suggestions for how such activity might be more effectively or reasonably pursued.

Supporting authorities are urged to sustain a critical approach by adopting the guiding principles set out above.

3.19 The 'carrot' of the Civil Protection package has been ineffective. Most authorities recognise it for what it is : an attempt to legitimise civil defence planning and to obscure its primacy using the guise of 'civil protection'. Furthermore, in the face of a spate of recent disasters, the inaccurate impression promoted in the 'Civil Protection' package that an effective peacetime emergency planning service exists in Britain has been exposed. Even the Home Office has been forced to react to pressure and has set up a review of peacetime emergency planning arrangements in Britain. Authorities are encouraged to promote a reversal of current priorities through their Associations : effective peacetime emergency planning should come first, and civil defence second - not the other way round as at present. (B)

4. NUCLEAR POWER

4.1 Since the last AGM, the NSC's work on nuclear power related issues has increased substantially. This has reflected both key national developments, for example, in arrangements for radiation monitoring and Nirex's consultation exercise on the disposal of nuclear waste, and the activity of supporting authorities, for example, on the proposed PWR at Hinkley C and on the transportation of nuclear materials by rail and air. These and other issues are considered in more detail below.

Local Authority Radiation Monitoring

4.2 Following the two conferences organised by the NSC (Sheffield, December 1986, and Wythenshawe, April 1987), a substantial number of local authorities have become involved in radiation monitoring schemes. It is now known that there are over 250 local authorities involved, either individually or in groups. The Secretariat takes the view that the two NSC Conferences provided a valuable boost to these developments, providing forums for discussing key issues such as types of monitoring equipment, the location and frequency of monitoring and co-ordination and liaison arrangements.