

Minutes of 111 AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting

Thursday 24 April 2025

Aldermaston

Present:

Ian Rogers	Chair, Chief Nuclear Officer and Executive Director Assurance, AWE
Cllr Lyndon Austin	Silchester Parish Council
Cllr Philip Bassil	Brimpton Parish
Cllr Adrian Betteridge	Wokingham Borough Council
Cllr Mike Bound	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Cllr Graham Bridgman	Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council
Cllr Avril Burdett	Tadley Town Council
Cllr Jonathan Chishick	Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Council
Cllr Colin Cooper	Baughurst Parish Council
Cllr Sophie Crawford	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Kevin Cross	Mortimer West End Parish Council
Cllr Mark Keeping	Reading Borough Council
Cllr Clive Littlewood	Holy Brook Parish Council
Cllr George McGarvie	Pamber Parish Council
Cllr Clarence Mitchell	Reading Borough Council
Cllr Ian Montgomery	Shinfield Parish Council
Cllr Susan Mullan	Tadley Town Council
Cllr Vicky Poole	West Berkshire Council
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Jo Slimin	Basingstoke and Deane Council
Cllr John Seto	Theale Parish Council
Cllr Simon Taylor	Swallowfield Parish Council
Cllr Jim Thompson	Wokefield Parish Council

Director Environment and Sustainability	AWE
Director Estate Strategy & Planning	AWE
Estate Planning and Development Lead	AWE
Head of Asset Operations Management	AWE

Head of Communications FMC	AWE
Head of Delivery ESH & Quality	AWE
Responsible Business Manager	AWE
Responsible Business Specialist	AWE
Responsible Business Specialist	AWE
Senior Manager Emergency Response	AWE
Senior Manager Responsible Business	AWE

Regulators:

Rob Green	Environment Agency
Gareth Lock	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Karl Pallester	Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator

Local Authority:

Jonah Maddocks	West Berkshire Council
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Introduction:

Ian Rogers, Chair, welcomed members to the 111 LLC meeting.

Membership changes

- Cllr Simon Taylor has been appointed as Swallowfield Parish Council LLC representative, replacing Cllr Mark Binns.

Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Dominic Boeck	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Robert Jones	Padworth Parish Council
Cllr Jane Langford	Purley on Thames Parish Council
Cllr David Leeks	Tadley Town Council
Carolyn Richardson	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Paul Woodley	Wasing Parish Council

Approval of 110th LLC minutes

Questions arising from 110th LLC minutes

Cllr Jo Slimin: Update council representation details to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Cllr Johnathan Chishick: Update parish council representation details to Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Council.

Actions from 110th LLC Meeting – 7th November 2024

Action 109/06 AWE to follow up on the school contact numbers on the emergency list in the event of an incident.

Update on public text alerting system in conjunction with West Berkshire Council to be discussed during today's emergency planning agenda item.

Closed

110 LLC Actions

110/01 ACTION: Ian Rogers to give an update on the site undercover as a result of the fire at Barrow.

Update from Ian Rogers at 111 LLC

Closed

110/02 ACTION: Cllr Vicky Poole to give update on broadband access in West Berkshire parishes.

Emailed to LLC members when sending agenda for 111 LLC

Closed

110/03 ACTION: Reformat future planning slide into black and white (slide 7) and send to all LLC members

Reformatted into black and white and sent to LLC members as part of the minutes on 24.01.25

Closed

110/04 ACTION: Bryan Lyttle to investigate AWE's possible reasoning from Cllr Sophie Crawford's statement

Estate Planning and Development Lead to give an update on this as part of the Development Update

Closed

110/05 ACTION: Send out details of how to join the online community drop-in sessions to all members of the Local Liaison Committee on 7 November 2024

Sent out details and link to LLC members on 7.11.24

Closed

110/06 ACTION: Triage slide pack for any future LLC meetings to ensure colour contrast and size of text is appropriate.

Slide deck for 111 LLC triaged by Responsible Business and media to ensure accessibility for all. Relevant presentations and reports printed as hard copies.

Closed

**110/07 Action: Environment to have an agenda item at the 111 LLC meeting
Director Environment and Sustainability to present today at 111 LLC**

Closed

**110/08 Action: Head of ESH & Quality to share more on the 'We Care' campaign at next meeting
Head of Delivery ESH & Quality to share updates on the We Care Campaign today at 111 LLC**

Closed

**110/09 Action: Head of ESH & Quality to share a breakdown of the type of injuries at the next meeting
There is a requirement for transparency, however, Health data is considered special category personal information under the GDPR. Therefore, an overview of injury types will be given during today's meeting.**

Closed

Questions arising:

Cllr Avril Burdett: Formally noted thanks to Cllr Vicky Poole for information on broadband in local areas (action 110/02).

Action 111/01: Ian Rogers proposed to close action 110/02 as investigation is currently underway and made a commitment to share learning from the Barrow fire when it becomes available.

Chair's Update

Organisation update including site operations – Ian Rogers

AWE celebrates the Establishment's 75th anniversary

For 75 years, the Atomic Weapons Establishment has been keeping the nation safe, protecting the UK through nuclear science and technology. This was marked with a visit to the AWE Education Collection for LLC members.

World events

The changes that the Trump administration is making or considering, do not have any impact on AWE, the way AWE operates or the UK government's ability to deliver national security.

Engineering Expo

In February, AWE delivered an Engineering Expo to provide an opportunity for industry leaders, VIPs and academics from across the UK to find out more about what AWE does. Over the three days at Reading, AWE saw over 1,300 people explore more than 89 different teams on display.

Reading

AWE is aware that traffic is a concern for residents. AWE is in the early stages of its assessments, however, will share more with the LLC members and the local planning authority, (West Berkshire Council) as it develops its location strategy plans. AWE is already planning into the future, opening satellite offices, including Reading, London and Leicester to relocate some teams out of Aldermaston.

Community and school engagement

The AWE exhibition is still open at West Berkshire Museum. An AWE colleague delivered a talk at the venue in March and an all-day primary school STEM event for 160 students was also delivered there in April.

Over the summer, AWE is running an art competition in several local schools, asking them to picture what AWE will look like in 75 years' time, with the winners receiving a science show for their school.

AWE employees have been collecting unused and expired kit and donating it to the frontline in Ukraine. AWE has just sent its third convoy, which was gratefully received.

AWE is continuing to raise money for its charity partner PACT and employees are using their volunteering days to benefit the community.

Connect

AWE's community magazine, Connect, was sent out at the end of February into early March to 38,000 neighbours. The paper magazine has a new format, which has a smaller booklet with a QR code to direct people to find out more on the AWE website. So far, more than 350 individual users have accessed the Connect webpage, enabling AWE to save paper and get an understanding of how useful people find it. The next edition is due out in October.

Questions arising:

Cllr Colin Cooper: How many people will be moving to these satellite sites?

Ian Rogers: You will be updated when the figures are available.

Cllr Graham Bridgman: How many people are at Reading right now?

Ian Rogers: A small team at the moment as part of a pilot scheme.

Cllr Jo Slimin: Will people who are unable to access Connect magazine through the QR code miss out?

Senior Manager Responsible Business: Key information is presented on the paper copy and the QR code directs you to supplementary information. Connect magazine can also be found through a Google search and our website.

Questions since the last meeting:

- AWE has received several requests from parish councils to attend meetings. While AWE is more than happy to work with local communities, there is an expectation that the AWE LLC representative role is to share the information received at LLC meetings with parishioners. Unfortunately, if AWE receives requests to attend meetings to repeat what is discussed at the LLC, it will have to decline. Minutes of each meeting can be found on the AWE website. AWE sent a representative to the Baughurst and Stratfield Mortimer parish council meetings in April.
- The drones team has received three separate requests after their presentation at the last LLC. The team is finding availability in the diary and will get these booked in as soon as possible.
- Aldermaston Historical Group, through Cllr Dave Shirt, has requested an AWE speaker at one of their meets next year. Paul Burton is attending.
- Cllr Avril Burdett requested support from AWE for the 434th US Airborne Division visit to Tadley as part of WWII commemorations. However, due to changes in USA leadership, the event has now been cancelled.
- Cllr Colin Cooper offered speeding traffic data. Thank you, Colin.
- Cllr Jim Thompson had an enquiry into overgrown roadside hedges around the Burghfield site that were impacting a pathway. AWE grounds maintenance team have now trimmed this area to ensure safety for pedestrians.

Estates and Liabilities Update**Head of Asset Operations Management**

The 'Women's Peace Camp' continue their monthly camp at AWE and there are no upcoming planned or known protest activities.

Since November, there have been six calls to the community concerns desk, which was triaged to three. All calls were taken through the concerns process and closed once suitable action had been taken. Two of those calls were regarding site alarms and one was regarding behaviours of a perceived AWE employee.

Decommissioning continues and a recent milestone was achieved when effluent tanks were successfully consigned for treatment and recycling. Recycling is of paramount importance in conjunction with AWE's responsibility to sustainable waste management. 69.2 tonnes of steel have been consigned for processing.

Decommissioning of a second glove box continues, reducing it to the base plate. AWE is now looking at how it can move forward to safely dispose of the remaining items of the glovebox.

AWE is also demolishing older conventional buildings that have hazards around them. These buildings have been classed as redundant and no longer needed, to provide space for future real estate. AWE will then continue the recycling process of the materials that arise from this demolition where possible. Some of the conventional buildings being demolished contain hazards such as asbestos.

AWE continues to work with its supply chain to achieve its objectives to remove legacy waste. This has been essential and successful work under Licence Condition 32.

Over the last year, AWE has focused on alleviating traffic congestion at its gates and car parks.

Questions arising

Cllr Avril Burdett: What is the end point for asbestos and the process involved?

Head of Asset Operations Management: Those involved have to be licenced to dispose of asbestos waste. There are a number of commercial processes linked to this that tie in with recycling and waste management including deep landfill.

Cllr Kevin Cross: What do you mean by the 'base plate'?

Head of Asset Operations Management: It is the layer inside the glove box on which the equipment rests. It is not the foundation.

Development Update**Estate Planning and Development Lead**

There have been significant changes to planning legislation and guidance since 2020, including: changes to the use classes order, the general development planning order, the national planning policy framework, the planning practice guidance. AWE is not a statutory consultee on any planning application that is submitted to the local planning authorities. However, local planning authority officers do consult with AWE. There are changes still to be implemented in terms of national development control policies, further changes to the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the planning and infrastructure bill that is currently going through Parliament. This does not mean that planning restrictions have been removed regarding AWE. The response to any application must be considered in light of the legislation at the time that the planning application is submitted. Therefore, Bryan Lyttle will give a full update in the November 2025 LLC meeting.

There should be no implications for AWE in the next twelve months as a result of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. AWE should still be on track for submitted planning applications to all the involved local planning authorities. The next piece of information to be submitted to West Berkshire Council is an application to remove planning condition four in relation to The Hub building – linked to demolition and phasing the demolition plan to remove 75,000 square metres of existing buildings.

Long term, it is recognised that the Government is keen to introduce spatial strategies and plans at a strategic level, resulting in AWE needing to engage with multiple strategic authorities within the local government organisation. This will be key for AWE's long-term future with West Berkshire Council, Basingstoke and Deane Council, Reading Council and Wokingham Council.

AWE has been involved in five planning applications near AWE sites since last meeting.

- The Hollies was an allocated site in the West Berkshire Local Plan. The developer did not develop before the plan was reviewed, resulting in West Berkshire removing it from their future Local Plan as it now falls inside the detailed emergency planning zone (extended in 2020) and so refused permission to build. The Planning Inspectorate at the first appeal decided that the 32 houses could be built. AWE objected to this decision and the High Court quashed the decision and requiring a second appeal by public inquiry. The second Planning Inspector decided that an incident at AWE was very unlikely to happen and given that the development had been allocated in the current Local Plan it could go ahead and be developed. AWE did not appeal this decision.
- Hayes Drive planning application for approximately 150 houses in Wokingham – public inquiry February 2025. This application has been called in by the Secretary of State for determination. AWE is awaiting the determination.

- Brimpton Common, West Berkshire. AWE objected. The application was refused and there was a planning inquiry. The Planning Inspector recognised that the site was inside the detailed planning zone and refused the appeal so planning permission was not granted.
- Strawberry Farm, Aldermaston. A single dwelling that burnt down. Seeking to rebuild. AWE and ONR objected. Called in by the National Planning Case Unit to give an opinion to the Secretary of State. Permission has now been granted for one dwelling inside the detailed emergency planning zone.
- Swallowfield/Spencers Wood – an outline planning application has been submitted to Wokingham for circa 450 houses, 80-bed care home, primary school all within the detailed emergency planning zone. There is also an additional application close by for around 150 houses. AWE will object to these applications as they are inside the DEPZ.

A six-month shuttle bus service running from Aldermaston train station to AWE Aldermaston began in March 2025. The aims are to reduce traffic pressure on car parks and gate entrances at peak times. The service is for AWE staff only.

Action 111/02: Estate Planning and Development Lead to share results of six-month review of shuttle bus service at 112 LLC

Questions arising:

Cllr Jonathan Chishick: If the objective is to persuade staff to use the train, why isn't the bus linked to specific trains?

Estate Planning and Development Lead: It is based on muster and out muster times for staff.

Cllr Sophie Crawford: There is a smaller commercial development application at Woodstock on Paices Hill. Both planning applications were refused by West Berkshire Council. It is now being appealed. Do you get involved in these cases?

Estate Planning and Development Lead: It is very hard for AWE as a non-statutory consultee, to be informed about written representations.

Infrastructure Investment Update – Future Materials Campus

Head of Communications, Future Materials Campus

There are no infrastructure investment updates to report as AWE is continuing to refine its plans. New information will be shared once available.

In Autumn 2024, six in-person community engagement events were held and two online. As a result, AWE spoke to 312 members of the public, with feedback forms from 71. There were 1,8000 views of the citizen space website and 7,000 views from ten Facebook posts.

Many of the people who came to the community events were current, potential or previous employees. 75% of attendees would like to be kept informed about AWE in the future. Feedback shows that visitors to the community engagement events want to know how AWE will benefit the local community, benefit the local environment and job opportunities.

AWE will continue to build a programme of proactive engagement events, thinking about how it can best share information with its communities. AWE has commissioned Social Engine, a research agency, to help AWE understand the needs of its communities.

28th June 2025 – AWE community event in Tadley as part of the AWE 75 anniversary celebrations.

Questions arising

None

Emergency Planning and Response Update

Senior Manager Emergency Response & Jonah Maddocks

AWE and West Berkshire District Council have created a joint report for the LLC.

There have been no changes made to the AWE on-site emergency plan arrangements. The offsite emergency plan has had major revisions since the previous live version three years ago. It has been out for consultation to the offsite planning group (multi-agency partners and responders) and is now being updated as a result of this consultation. This revised document (subject to reviews and sign off) is anticipated to be live in Summer 2025 with a public version being produced after this.

Significant progress has been made with the AWE public text alerting system – this will be in parallel to the landline system. Small testing and mass testing has already been carried out with an anticipated launch for Summer 2025. It is an opt-in system, delivered by BT and will give an alert incident option for if there is an incident at AWE Aldermaston or Burghfield. This is separate to the Government alerting system. The public communications are currently being finalised, which will include a letter posted to all within the detailed emergency planning zone, providing information about the alert system and how to sign up.

There is planning for 2026 level 1 (test of onsite emergency plans) and 2 (test of offsite emergency plans) exercises. AWE is currently looking at the possibility of running a level 1 and level 2 in parallel as an advancement of how it tests the emergency plans.

REPPIR – the three yearly REPPIR assessment is scheduled and is currently being undertaken, with submission to West Berkshire Council in the final quarter of 2025. AWE is not expecting any changes to their consequences report which recommends the Urgent Protection Actions and is sent to West Berkshire who is responsible for determining the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) and also the off-site emergency plan.

In the reporting period November 2024 to March 2025, there have been no incidents that have required activation of the AWE offsite emergency plan. Also, there have not been any onsite incidents where we have informed the local authority.

Questions arising

CIr Vicky Poole: For vulnerable families without mobile phones, will a ‘text to voice’ system to a landline be used in this case?

Senior Manager Emergency Response: I will confirm an answer for this and respond.

Action 111/03: Senior Manager Emergency Response to provide an answer to Vicky Poole’s question on ‘text to voice’ system for landlines

CIr Vicky Poole: Will the AWE system work in parallel with the national alert system?

Senior Manager Emergency Response: The national alert system and the AWE alert system will work in parallel with each other. For those who sign up to the AWE text alert system, this will operate separately to the national alert system.

Cllr Graham Bridgman: Could we have posters for local parishes to raise awareness of the AWE text alerting system?

Senior Manager Emergency Response: Yes, this will be included in the communications plan.

Cllr Colin Cooper: Are you allowing for multiple mobile phones in a single household?

Senior Manager Emergency Response: Because it is an opt-in system, anyone can register, including multiple mobile phones for a single household. No personal data is required to register - only the mobile number. AWE and West Berkshire Council do not have access to the mobile phone numbers that have opted in to the system. This is held by the provider BT.

Cllr Vicky Poole: What would happen to this system in the event of a cyber-attack and how would scientists communicate that there is a hazardous issue during a cyber-attack?

Ian Rogers: AWE does not share information about its security protocols in this forum. As part of licencing to operate nuclear facilities, AWE must provide safety justifications supported by engineering substantiation reports, which demonstrate how we protect against reasonably foreseeable pulse sequences. Attacks against operational technology is a pulse sequence, so we do have arrangements in place that protect in the event of any targeted attacks.

Senior Manager Emergency Response: We have several ways to activate different communications systems that are independent of each other.

Cllr Jo Slimin: Will there be a publicly accessible version of the West Berkshire Emergency Plan?

Jonah Maddocks: There will be a publicly accessible version of the West Berkshire Emergency Plan. We have sent bespoke schools' guidance – this was sent last year.

Cllr Avril Burdett: In future reports, information you can tell us to reassure our communities about what would happen if there was an incident at AWE would be helpful.

Sophie Crawford: Is there any follow up by West Berkshire on conditions of planning applications?

Action 111/04: How do West Berkshire follow up on conditions of planning applications to be a specific agenda item for 112 LLC

Environment update

Director Environment and Sustainability

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy was refreshed and ratified by the AWE Executive and AWE Board at the end of 2024. This resulted in three key themes that AWE will focus on from an environment and sustainability perspective. Climate action and carbon, biodiversity and circular economy.

Climate action and carbon – AWE has developed a plan around climate transition to look at current carbon emissions and how the business can minimise this over time. AWE net zero target is 2050. Some of this work has already been included in the AWE ESG report shared at a previous LLC meeting. AWE has already installed several Electronic Vehicle charging points and continues to develop this infrastructure. AWE continues to imbed sustainability within its thinking and design, such as its new infrastructure projects

to future proof waste reduction. Through ISO20400, AWE looks at sustainability through its supply chain and sustainable procurement.

Biodiversity – AWE protects and enhances the biodiversity that already exists on its sites and helps to develop it outside of the AWE fence lines. Highlights including ‘no mowing’ of 250,000m². AWE has planted over 600 trees across its sites.

Circular economy – AWE is making conscious decisions to ensure that circular economy for current resources and materials as well as materials involved in infrastructure projects are used as sustainably as possible to reduce waste. AWE has minimised the use of single use plastics in its catering, which in turn has reduced waste production as the plastics used can be recycled.

In the future, AWE will imbed a sustainability mindset within its operations.

Questions arising

Cllr Avril Burdett: Do you still complete a species list such as a bird count and an orchid count?

Director Environment and Sustainability: Yes, we do continue to complete species counts across our sites.

Cllr David Shirt: There was no mention of light pollution on your slides. Light pollution can be quite bad from the Aldermaston site. Are you aware of this?

Ian Rogers: Thank you for sharing this. We will make this an action to investigate.

Action: 111/05 to investigate light pollution in the local area.

Cllr Colin Cooper: Could you give us an update on the solar farms and the progress there?

Director Environment and Sustainability: These are still in progress, initially planned for this year, but there has been a delay. It is still part of our transition plan, but looks like it will be pushed out to the end of next year because of complexities with the contractual arrangements with those that will run the solar farm.

Cllr Ian Montgomery: On the slide it says ‘metering underway for data collection’. What is this?

Director Environment and Sustainability: This is as simple as putting meters in so that we can automate data collection rather than having to collect recordings manually. In turn, this will make AWE’s energy data more robust.

Ian Rogers: Through governance, it will also enable the business to hold people and teams to account for their energy usage, seeking to reduce where feasible.

Cllr George McGarvie: Is AWE going to manage employees on site to maximize reduced energy prices at certain times of the day?

Ian Rogers: AWE is looking at its current operational profile to see if there is a better way to use the site in a more effective and efficient way.

Cllr Sophie Crawford: You mentioned that there are around 9,000 employees. Can you give us the total figure of people coming into the site as employees and contractors?

Ian Rogers: The 9,000 is the total number of employees and contractors across all AWE sites.

Senior Manager Responsible Business: At the next LLC in November, there will be a team updating on AWE’s current and future skills needs and workforce size.

Action 111/06: AWE to provide a future skills and workforce update at 112 LLC.

Cllr Sophie Crawford: Is the workforce size going to grow?

Ian Rogers: Yes, especially with additional contractors for the infrastructure projects, which is why we have the location strategy that is moving some employees to sites such as Reading and London.

Regulators Update

Gareth Lock - Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)

Reporting period: 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Inspections: ONR made site inspections at AWE on 8 October 2024, 12 November 2024, 12 December 2024, 11 February 2025 and 12 March 2025.

Routine matters: In the reporting period, ONR inspectors have continued to work with AWE Nuclear Liabilities team and have successfully closed the level 2 Decommissioning Regulatory issue.

ONR undertook further activities to assess AWE's progress in delivering safety improvements necessary to support the AWE Aldermaston site moving to a routine level of regulatory attention. The ONR is satisfied that AWE has clearly demonstrated positive steps in leadership, organisational capability, decision-making and internal assurance, which has allowed ONR to return AWE to routine regulatory attention. AWE has been informed of this decision and a press brief was released on 6 March 2025.

A Prohibition Notice was issued by ONR to AWE on 26 May 2022, prohibiting entry into part of the Plutonium Technology Centre (PTC) classified as 'confined space' unless a safe system of work is in place. AWE has developed a safe system of work (SSoW) to allow entry into this area and in parallel are working to modify the arrangement of the plant, so that in future it would not be classified as a 'confined space'. The ONR will continue regular engagement with AWE in the lead up to the PTC Enhance Project Period.

At the 110 LLC meeting in November 2024, the ONR reported that a new planning inquiry for The Hollies development was held in September 2024. Along with AWE, West Berkshire Council and other interested parties, provided evidence to the new planning inquiry, who made the decision to allow the development to go ahead.

The ONR continue to undertake a series of activities in support of the oversight and permissioning of significant programmes of work including:

- Completion of construction and the preparations for commencement of commissioning activities within the new warhead facility (Burghfield).
- Progressing decommissioning activities on the Aldermaston site.
- Progressing facility improvement and capability up-lift projects on the Aldermaston site.

AWE is progressing its 'Enduring Capability Review' work to implement an organisational structure that best meets the needs of the business to deliver its future programme requirements, and to deliver a more efficient, resilient and flexible organisational capability. The ONR has started initial engagement on these organisational changes.

Non-routine matters: On 6 July 2023, AWE notified the ONR that an incident had occurred on the Hub Construction Enclave resulting in significant injuries to two workers. One worker was airlifted to hospital, but later died from their injuries. In accordance with the death at work protocol, Thames Valley Police led the

investigation until December 2023, when primacy transferred to the ONR. Further information will be shared when the ONR are able to do so.

AWE informed ONR of an event that took place in the Explosive Technology Centre (XTC) facility in April 2024. The outcome was a 'holding to account meeting' with senior site representatives. There was a further event in XTC in August 2024. ONR was informed of this event. No nuclear material was present or is ever present in the XTC. Therefore, there was no risk to nuclear safety, the public or the environment. The ONR applied the ONR's Enforcement Management Model. As a result of its considerations, the ONR issued an improvement notice and associated schedule. AWE must take action to improve these contraventions by Monday 20 August 2025.

Regulatory activity: On 30 October 2024, the ONR issued an improvement notice to AWE for Contraventions of Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Section 2(1) Management of Health and safety at Work Regulations, Regulation 5.

Regulators Update

Rob Green - Environment Agency (EA)

Non-routine matters: The Environment Agency (EA) has been working on a consultation for regulation of radioactive waste disposal facilities. The consultation is now closed and the responses will help to inform the guidance once it is issued.

The EA Annual Report looks at the scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services. The Nuclear Waste Services sits above and runs the waste framework and contracts that the nuclear sites operators use for disposal and treatment of the waste that they produce. The report includes the work that the EA has carried out on this over the last twelve months.

The EA has also produced a Chief Regulatory report.

The Radioactivity in Food and the Environment report (RIFE) is published in November each year. The EA undertake a programme of environmental monitoring around nuclear sites. This involves taking environmental samples and analysing them. All operators of nuclear licences sites must undertake their own environmental monitoring programmes. This national report shows that there were no significant changes to radioactivity measures including environment. The dose received by the public near to nuclear licenced sites in the UK is low and well within legal limits. Food remains safe and the public's exposure to artificial radiation is within legal limits. Radioactivity from a natural background continues to be a more significant source of exposure to communities in all areas of the UK. For AWE, the radioactive dose to the public is 0.011mSv (approximately 1% of the legal dose limit). It is a very low number.

Routine matters: In April 2025, EA issued the Site Environmental Review and Plan for AWE. The plan sets out what the EA deems as being a particular focus: regulatory priorities, level of resource applied to regulate AWE's nuclear sites and gives a view on how the EA see AWE's environmental performance from the previous year. Key priorities for this year are:

- Monitoring the progress of AWE's High Activity Waste programme to reduce fissile inventory and hazard on site
- Decommissioning planning and progress as well as AWE's management of contractors to support waste management and decommissioning activities
- Asset management – specifically related to environmentally critical equipment
- AWE's environment and waste functions' capabilities to support enduring compliance
- AWE's implementation and improvements to environmental permit compliance assurance at facility level

The EA completed a compliance inspection on management of gaseous radioactive waste, which resulted in no non-compliances reported.

Following notification by AWE of an Abnormal Event concerning the loss of radioactive gaseous waste discharge sampling capability in one of AWE's legacy facilities, EA completed an off-site compliance assessment. It noted two minor non-compliances with the Aldermaston site radioactive waste environmental permit and placed appropriate corrective actions on AWE.

Non-ferrous metals permit activity compliance inspection in December 2024 – no non-compliances reported.

EA completed offsite reviews for radioactive waste discharges data and non-radioactive substances activities that are regulated, such as combustion, carbon and non-ferrous metals. EA recorded no non-compliances with the permit, but identified three regulatory recommendations for AWE's consideration.

Questions arising

Cllr Philip Bassil: The report states that the radiation dose from AWE nuclear sites was 0.011mSv for 2023, which is an increase from 0.005mSv in 2023. The increase was attributed to a higher estimate of direct radiation from the Aldermaston site. Why is this?

Rob Green: There has been an increase in the estimate gamma dose on site, based on the sampling.

Ian Rogers: We are operating at the extreme limits of radiochemistry detection. At that level of dosage, there is no concern as the levels are significantly below background radiation levels and within safe limits.

Cllr Mark Keeping: Is there a change in the methodology that has taken place to capture the estimate gamma dose on site?

Rob Green: I will enquire with the team that administrate this data to see if there have been any changes in methodology.

Cllr Jo Slimin: For data collection purposes, you talked about a representative person. Is that a real person?

Rob Green: No, it is based on habit surveys in the local area.

Action 111/07: AWE to share the environmental monitoring programmes that it undertakes at its sites.

Action 111/08: Rob Green to provide an update at the next LLC as to whether there has been a change in methodology for capturing the estimate gamma radiation dose at AWE sites.

Regulators Update

Karl Pallester - Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator

The Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator is one of eight regulators internally for defence and is responsible for Disapplications, Exemptions or Derogations (DED) from Statute. When the government brings forward a piece of legislation, there is the potential for the legislation to have a disapplication, exemption or derogation within it. In the case of AWE, under the AWE Act, there is an exemption and DNSR monitors this. The exemption is when explosives and radioactive materials come together. There is a 'through life' safety focus of the AWE product, so the DNSR is interested in the 'knock on' effects of this activity. DNSR

work with multiple teams across AWE, with DNSR inspectors visiting the AWE centres, talking to facility operators to provide assurance.

Currently, there are eight outstanding enforcements at AWE, two of which are about to close as suitable evidence has been gathered. There are two Regulatory Hold Points.

In November 2024, the DNSR also had some responsibility for international business. AWE is partnered with France as part of a series of hydrodynamic experiments in a shared facility. The DNSR has visited this facility to work on AC7 arrangements on incidents at this facility.

In March 2025, DNSR worked with the ONR to perform an LC26, which is control and supervision of operations.

In February 2025, the DNSR provided an assessment to prove the integrity of equipment.

The DNSR has finalised its quarterly report for quarter 3 and the annual report for AWE (as part of the wider DNSR report) has been drafted with no deteriorations in safety markings for AWE.

Questions arising

Cllr Vicky Poole: As the UK is increasing its readiness with defence activities, if you are putting hold points on defence materials, will this weaken the UK's defence position as a country? What pressures are going to be put on AWE to resolve the issues to meet the quota or demand?

Karl Pallester: The UK has a stockpile of AWE product so the hold points are not jeopardising any defence critical missions. AWE do need the facilities in question for production, however the hold points were placed when the facility was not in active production. To AWE's credit, it had already placed its own internal controls on the facility and is fully aware of what needs to be achieved to correct this.

Environment, Safety, Health and Quality Update

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality

AWE track all business injuries and have a world class safety record, measuring the business against UK and American systems for benchmarking purposes. From March 2024 to February 2025, 24 people sustained work-related injuries. This figure is approximately a fifty-fifty split between main workforce and contractors. AWE routinely works with its contractors to find out what they are doing for injury prevention, what AWE can learn from them and what they can learn from AWE.

Of the 24 recorded injuries, 12 were to members of staff, 17 required one or more days away from work to recover, 574 working days lost. This equates to 0.248 OSHA Rate which is below the 0.3 OSHA rate target that AWE has.

There were three process safety loss of control/containment events between 30 September 2024 and 28 February 2025. All three events have been investigated and appropriate preventative actions have been put in place. AWE continues to raise awareness of process safety leadership for senior leaders, process safety management for supervisors and process safety awareness for apprentices. AWE is now developing extended reality training to raise awareness amongst staff at all levels of the organisation. ONR is notified of significant events. Since the last LLC meeting in November 2024, AWE

has notified the ONR of five events.

The AWE 'We Care' campaign is an AWE initiative that encompasses six topics: environment, learning from experience, safety, security, quality and wellbeing. It is designed to deliver a safety uplift programme across the business for all employees. Banners have been located on external fence lines, displaying statements from the AWE Executive with personal commitment statements against these six topics. Displayed inside its sites are banners of AWE's workforce with their commitments to the 'We Care' campaign topics. This campaign has been extended to its satellite sites to ensure that all employees are engaged in the commitment to the 'We Care' campaign. The campaign has designed and displayed 'Life Saving Rules' and 'Office Behaviours' signage to remind employees of key points to stay safe. This campaign will continue into next year with site wide 'Stop for...' sessions in May and November. These are where the company will stop for a day to engage in the six key topics and how they are relevant in their area, addressing any need for changes. Establishing new AWE site rules, improving visual leadership and improving psychological safety are also planned.

Questions arising

Cllr Mark Keeping: Because you have given an annual figure for injuries, could you give some commentary on trend from the previous twelve months?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: Broadly similar. AWE has met its target for the last four years. However, AWE continues to challenge itself as to whether this is a tight enough target or whether it should be reduced.

Cllr Philip Bassil: Are the 574 working days lost as a result of the 24 people injured?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: Yes. Some of these injuries such as slips and trips resulting in sprains and fractures would incur a significant amount of time off work.

Cllr Vicky Poole: From previous data, the number of accidents seems to be lower. Is there any trending for these accidents appearing from a site, facility or team?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: The numbers are broadly similar. In terms of location, a large proportion of the accidents are a result of moving around the site.

Cllr Vicky Poole: Is the accident data broken down into injuries occurring moving around the site or whilst doing work?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: In the majority of cases, people are injured by the work environment rather than the work they are doing. AWE has very few injuries resulting from the task being carried out by employees.

Cllr Mark Keeping: How will the fatality affect these figures?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: It has already been accounted for in previous data for 2023. In terms of working days lost, it is measured as a single day.

Cllr Vicky Poole: Of the discharges that are going into the waterways, what liquid is going in and how toxic is it to the wildlife in the water?

Action: 111/09 Head of Delivery ESH & Quality to provide update at November LLC meeting on discharges going into waterways

Cllr George McGarvie: Are you still running AWE's perfect days?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: Yes, they have been reintroduced as part of the 'We Care' campaign.

Cllr Vicky Poole: Do disabilities and support for employees who receive an autism or ADHD diagnosis fit in to the 'We Care' campaign?

Head of Delivery ESH & Quality: We have teams at AWE who would support these. Some fit into our broader Wellbeing strategy with others included in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy.

Action 111/10: To provide information on AWE's focus groups including Wellbeing.

AWE 75 Anniversary tour of the Educational Collection

LLC representatives were given a tour of the AWE Educational Collection with key 75 Anniversary pieces being noted.

Any other business

Rob Green: There have been discussions about the difficulty of accessing site, how AWE has rebranded itself and is being transparent in terms of how it presents itself in the public domain. The AWE Local Liaison Committee operates differently to other similar committees at nuclear sites across the country. At other sites, the site stakeholder groups run the meetings. It is also an open-door policy to the public and press. Is it time to revisit how the site stakeholder group runs and whether it should be held off site and open to the public as AWE continues to be open and transparent with its communities.

Ian Rogers: The AWE LLC is very unique. AWE is an arms-length body of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), so the Ministry of Defence, at the moment, approves all LLC presentations. Consequently, a change in how the LLC is run would currently need approval from the MoD.

Action 111/11: Chair to explore possible options for revising the format of future AWE LLC meetings.

Meeting closed

Date of Next meeting:

Thursday 6 November 2025