

[REDACTED]

**Minutes of the Twenty Ninth Meeting of the
Depleted Uranium Firing Environmental Review Committee
Held at Netheravon Camp on 6th of March 2002**

1 Present

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	GVIU 3a
[REDACTED]	D/SEF Pol
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	DSTL
[REDACTED]	DSTL
[REDACTED]	CESO(A)
[REDACTED]	Kirkcudbright Training Area
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 29th DUFERC Meeting at the Officers Mess at Netheravon Camp and thanked [REDACTED] for his organisation of the event.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for their absence were received from [REDACTED] & [REDACTED]

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

Corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting were discussed:

- 3.1 Paras 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 11.4 and 11.8 - The spelling of Kirkcudbright was not correct.
- 3.2 Para 8.1 – Should read Kirkcudbright rather than Eskmeals

Actions from the 28th and previous meetings were discussed:

- 3.3 **Action 26/7** - Foulness Survey should be going ahead soon now the team has returned from Kosovo. [REDACTED] will talk to DRPS and liaise with Shoeburyness – **ongoing**
 - 3.4 **Action 26/12** – For the LQA at Kirkcudbright, the forthcoming survey should provide all the information necessary. [REDACTED] was in discussion with DRPS about additional sampling points. - **ongoing.**
 - 3.5 **Action 27/4** [REDACTED] to find out who needs to take ownership of the VJ decommissioning plan. This (and action 27/3) will all be taken up with [REDACTED] Office who administer the FM contract for MoD. A briefing to [REDACTED] will be given on some of the current DU issues associated with the current FM
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

contract and the legacy issues including the role of the DUFERC/renaming to include other Radiological Protection Issues and the Decommissioning of VJ battery. – **ongoing**

- 3.6 **Action 28/1** – Fort Halstead have agreed that the 40 rounds left over from trials can be handed over to DSTL (FH), but they should be broken down at Eskmeals. There is still the problem of ~3 tonnes of DU plate and ~300 tonnes of contaminated plate. [REDACTED] is in contact with the Environmental Agency to see if they are willing to consider a possible landfill disposal site that has been identified – **ongoing**
- 3.7 **Action 28/2** – There were no surprises from the curtailed Kirkcudbright survey of winter 2001, which had been delayed due to the Foot & Mouth Epidemic. The next survey has actually started, with a scheduled completion date of 15th March 2002. – **complete**
- 3.8 **Action 28/3** – [REDACTED] formally wrote to DRPS and DRPS have had a letter from SERCo, this action has now been overtaken by events with the insource of SERCo staff on Ranges to QinetiQ – **complete**
- 3.9 **Action 28/4** – The Facilities team have agreed that QinetiQ can help GVIU directly in answering Parliamentary Enquiries – **complete**
- 3.10 **Action 28/5** – DRPS have sent a quote to the Kirkcudbright Range for their monitoring. The Range will now seek funding at the next DUWG – **ongoing**
- 3.11 **Action 28/6** – [REDACTED] has provided the cost information to the Kirkcudbright Range for continuing QinetiQ support for their sampling – **complete**

4 General

- 4.1 The indication by QinetiQ to insource all current SERCo contractors on the Ranges have some effect on the management of radioactive materials and the personnel on those sites affected. The insourcing will remove a lot of the problems highlighted by some of the auditors, where they saw two management systems and two safety regimes on the same site. The decision also means that some formal paperwork needs to be carried out with regard to the continued management of the Classified workers. Although QinetiQ hold the records for those workers at the moment, there needs to be the formal handover between the employers.
- 4.2 With regard to the management of the Ranges in the future, MoD have retained ownership of the land and legacy facilities on the formerly DERA Ranges. QinetiQ have a short-term contract (up to March 2003) to manage those ranges. It is the intention to negotiate a long-term contract (25 years) for the operation of the ranges, starting as the current interim contract expires. MoD have stated that their preferred operator for the ranges would be QinetiQ.

5 Kirkcudbright Report

- 5.1 All activities associated with the firing of DU have now ceased, but the routine sampling will continue. The Ballig target is still in place. A survey has been
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

carried out to see how the range stands, now there are no plans for further firings. The Range is still waiting for the DRPS 2000 and 2001 survey reports. It is the intention of the Range to ask for funding to allow sampling to continue.

5.2 Action 29/1 – [REDACTED] to ask the DUWG what avenues of funding are available to meet the commitments expressed in several answers to Parliamentary Enquiries.

5.3 There is an urgent need to address a possible continuity problem for the Kirkcudbright Range with the retirement of [REDACTED] within a year, and within CESO(A) with [REDACTED] having only 2 years to go before his retirement.

5.4 A useful document has been produced containing the number of DU rounds fired over the years. This has taken some time to collate, but it is the intention to present this as the "standard work" on the subject, and incorporate the information into the DU database being compiled by GVIU. The document contains not only the number of rounds, but also where they were fired from and the splash point data.

6 Eskmeals Report

6.1 The purchase of a new Exploranium detector has been completed. Until now there have been two systems available, one at Kirkcudbright and one at Eskmeals, the extra equipment can now be used on other ranges and to cover periods of maintenance/calibration.

6.2 The upgrade for the Tenelec system would cost £6.5k, this is now fairly urgent as the hardware is old and not supported.

6.3 The QinetiQ team have almost completed their withdrawal from the Kirkcudbright Range, leaving some instrumentation for continuation of the sampling programme. The Kirkcudbright Range ([REDACTED]) have said that they are satisfied with the withdrawal process and the site has been left in a satisfactory condition.

7 DRPS report

7.1 The diving schedule on the Kirkcudbright rig site may be changed to take advantage of good weather windows. At the moment the time of the dive is scheduled some time in advance, and on some occasions the weather has been too poor to dive. NDG have suggested it may be better to be reactive to good weather windows and breaks in the range firing schedule and dive as opportunities present themselves.

7.2 The next scheduled dive will be around towards the end of January 2002. [REDACTED] from the US Heavy Metals office has expressed a wish to accompany the dive team and visit Eskmeals and Kirkcudbright. It seems that the US are keen to collaborate especially with the recent work carried out by [REDACTED].

7.3 Action 29/2 – [REDACTED] to confirm the clearances for [REDACTED] with DRPS.

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- 7.4 There was some discussion on the possible replacement of the Sample Rig at Kirkcudbright. Dr Moonie had left the question open in a reply to a Parliamentary Enquiry where it was said that the rig would be replaced if it was thought to be cost effective. The feeling of the meeting was that the replacement of the rig with a similar (but more robust) arrangement at this time would not provide any more evidence than we already had. A better idea would be to place complete fired rounds buried into the sediment on the sea bed. Approximately 12 rounds recovered over a period of time would provide much more valuable data than a replacement of the rig. Although there is no funding for this at the moment, it was thought that putting these ideas into a proposal ready for an opportunity (if it presents itself) would be a good way forward.
- 7.5 **Action 29/3** – [REDACTED] to provide an outline project proposal for the next meeting.
- 7.6 [REDACTED] presented the most recent results from the ongoing corrosion experiments. The main theme of which was that there had been no surprises in the most recently collected samples, both land and marine show that the corrosion is continuing as expected.
- 7.7 It was thought that the new Commanding Officer of the range at Kirkcudbright might benefit from a brief on the DRPS work.
- 7.8 **Action 29/4** – [REDACTED] to ring the new CO and ask if he wanted such a briefing.
- 7.9 [REDACTED] suggested that [REDACTED] (DRPS) was going to bring up the requirements of REPIR at the next MoD DUWG (7th March 2002). [REDACTED] said that as far as Eskmeals and their holdings were concerned, they were in discussion with the Environmental Agency and had put forward a proposal (with DRPS help) for exemption from having to exercise with the Local Authority emergency services. This was based on the previous EA assessments that there would be little exposure to the general public in event of an emergency.
- 7.10 **Action 29/5** – [REDACTED] to give an update at the next meeting on progress towards this REPIR exemption.

8 AOB

- 8.1 [REDACTED] gave some details of some firings at Shoeburyness which involved contaminated barrels. Sampling was done before, during and after the firings, and some of these samples had shown some levels of Uranium present. DRPS are in the process of further analysis to find out if this is natural or depleted uranium contamination. Four out of the 10 samples showed some sort of Uranium present that was near the limit of detection, but further analysis is required before any conclusions can be made.
- 8.2 **Action 29/6** – [REDACTED] to give an update at the next meeting on any findings from the Shoeburyness contaminated barrel samples.
- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- 8.3 [REDACTED] mentioned that DRPS were about to release an unclassified report on Gun Barrel Monitoring.
 - 8.4 **Action 29/7 – [REDACTED] to provide copies of the report on gun barrel contamination to interested parties.**
 - 8.5 [REDACTED] mentioned that there was a new member of staff starting in CESO(A). [REDACTED] would be joining from the Environmental Agency, and he will probably accompany [REDACTED] to the next meeting and take over DUFERC and Land Quality Assessment duties from [REDACTED]
 - 8.6 [REDACTED] said that QinetiQ had recently produced a procedure covering Radiation Issues. This was trying to sweep up all the regulations in one document.
 - 8.7 [REDACTED] said that the GTLS (Gaseous Tritium Light Source) present in some equipment was causing some concerns. In the past some of this equipment had been calibrated at Eskmeals, but now this was to be done at QinetiQ Leigh. It was unclear whether QinetiQ Leigh were aware of the problems with this type of equipment, or whether they had the procedures in place to deal with GTLS equipment.
 - 8.8 **Action 29/8 – [REDACTED] to take a look at the QinetiQ Leigh operations.**

9 Date of next meeting

- 9.1 25th June 2002 at DRPS Alverstoke.

10 List of Actions Outstanding

- 10.1 **Action 26/7 - Foulness Survey should be going ahead soon now the team has returned from Kosovo. [REDACTED] will talk to DRPS and liaise with Shoeburyness – ongoing**
 - 10.2 **Action 26/12 – For the LQA at Kirkcudbright, the forthcoming survey should provide all the information necessary. [REDACTED] was in discussion with DRPS about additional sampling points. - ongoing.**
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 - 10.4 **Action 28/1 – Fort Halstead have agreed that the 40 rounds left over from trials can be handed over to DSTL (FH), but they should be broken down at Eskmeals. There is still the problem of ~3 tonnes of DU plate and ~300 tonnes of contaminated plate. [REDACTED] is in contact with the Environmental Agency to see if they are willing to consider a possible landfill disposal site that has been identified – ongoing.**
- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- 10.5 Action 28/5 –DRPS have sent a quote to the Kirkcudbright Range for their monitoring. The Range will now seek funding at the next DUWG–ongoing
 - 10.6 Action 29/1 – [REDACTED] to ask the DUWG what avenues of funding are available to meet the commitments expressed in several answers to Parliamentary Enquiries.
 - 10.7 Action 29/2 – [REDACTED] to confirm the clearances for [REDACTED] with DRPS.
 - 10.8 Action 29/3 – [REDACTED] to provide an outline project proposal for the next meeting.
 - 10.9 Action 29/4 – [REDACTED] to ring the new CO at Kirkcudbright and ask if he wanted a briefing.
 - 10.10 Action 29/5 – [REDACTED] to give an update at the next meeting on progress towards this REPPiR exemption.
 - 10.11 Action 29/6 – [REDACTED] to give an update at the next meeting on any findings from the Shoeburyness contaminated barrel samples.
 - 10.12 Action 29/7 – [REDACTED] to provide copies of the report on gun barrel contamination to interested parties.
 - 10.13 Action 29/8 – [REDACTED] to take a look at the QinetiQ Leigh operations.
- [REDACTED]