

[REDACTED]

**Minutes of the Twenty Third Meeting of the
Depleted Uranium Firing Environmental Review Committee
Held at DRPS on Thursday 17 August 2000**

Prior to the meeting there had been a brief tour of the DRPS facilities.

Present

[REDACTED]	DERA Boscombe (Chairman)
[REDACTED]	DERA Eskmeals (Secretary)
[REDACTED]	DRPS
[REDACTED]	BAe Royal Ordnance
[REDACTED]	MoD D/SEF Pol
[REDACTED]	MoD DEC(DBE)
[REDACTED]	DERA Eskmeals
[REDACTED]	DERA Eskmeals
[REDACTED]	MoD Abbey Wood
[REDACTED]	CESO(A)
[REDACTED]	Kirkcudbright Training Area
[REDACTED]	CHSEO DERA Farnborough
[REDACTED]	DERA Fraser
[REDACTED]	DRPS

The Chairman also welcomed [REDACTED] MoD DU Working Group Secretary, and [REDACTED] DRPS, to the meeting.

Item 1: Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies for their absence were received from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Item 2: Minutes of the 22nd Meeting

2. It was noted that the last sentence of minute 16 refers to a series of *proof* firings; this is inaccurate and should be amended to *trial*.
3. Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2000 were approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Item 3: Matters Arising

4. Actions from the 22nd and previous meetings were discussed:
 - a) Action 22/1. The review of risk assessments on receipt of a recovered DU projectile had not been completed. Action **continuing**.
 - b) Action 21/2. [REDACTED] reported that within the DERA only Eskmeals and Fort Halstead had officially recorded holdings of DU. However, he suggested that there could be other sites that also had small or transient holdings that had not been reported and that further work on this was therefore required. Action **continuing**.
 - c) Action 22/2. [REDACTED] confirmed that he had written to D&G Fire Brigade about their training needs but there had been no reply. Action **continuing**.
 - d) Action 22/3. In [REDACTED] absence, there was nothing further to report on the subject of finance. Action **continuing**.

[REDACTED]

Action 23/1: There was continuing uncertainty over the level of support funding being made available to the Sector for monitoring work; is it in fact £235k or £16k? [REDACTED] to obtain clarification.

- e) Action 22/4. The cost of a HESH trial had been estimated at approximately £35k, but this could be reduced if HQ Land were to waive the Kirkcudbright facility charge. A formal proposal is to be sent. Action **continuing**.
- f) Action 22/5. [REDACTED] reported that there had been an error and although the SEPA had been informed directly about the marine DU garden at Kirkcudbright the Council had not. They had, however, received a copy of the documents forming the request to the Fisheries Research Service for approval and this effectively served the same purpose. Action **complete**.

Item 4: Finance

- 5. The support funding of £16.5k previously agreed (but see Action 23/1 above) has been allocated to Eskmeals for completion of the preliminary survey of Raeberry Firing Point.
- 6. [REDACTED] pointed out that there were continuing efforts to reduce Eskmeals' operating costs and, indeed, there are likely to be further staffing reductions. A substantial proportion of those fixed costs, approximately £360k annually, is currently taken up in dealing with DU legacy issues.
- 7. A lengthy discussion followed during which various options for VJ Battery and the DU legacy generally were discussed. The main points were:
 - a) A meeting is scheduled for 11 September 2000 when decisions on which facilities are to be treated as 'strategic' will be made.
 - b) Various questions regarding post-PPP authorisations are being addressed.
 - c) The deadline for all outstanding issues to be resolved is effectively 1 April 2001.

Item 5: Kirkcudbright Update

- 8. [REDACTED] was pleased to report that the trial at Doon Hill had completed successfully and with no incidents. However, monitoring had revealed discrete pieces of old DU contamination. This had been notified to [REDACTED] via a letter to his Deputy, [REDACTED].
- 9. Funding for continuation of the Raeberry survey had been agreed and it was hoped that the work would take place shortly after the forthcoming Bank Holiday.
- 10. [REDACTED] asked what monitoring support could be provided by Eskmeals. [REDACTED] replied that limited support could be provided but that the cost of doing so would have to be charged. [REDACTED] confirmed that this also applied to any support provided by DRPS; HQ(Land) has a contract with DRPS covering advisory visits but surveys would need to be raised as a separate issue.

Action 23/2: DRPS to put forward proposals for surveying Doon Hill to [REDACTED] copy to [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
11. [REDACTED] was also pleased to inform the Committee that he had recently spoken with Councillor [REDACTED] Chairman of D&G Council's Fire, Police and Public Protection Committee. [REDACTED] had said that, in his opinion, there was no need for a public meeting this year but that a private meeting between DERA and his Committee might be useful.

Action 23/3: [REDACTED] to liaise with the Council, keeping [REDACTED] informed, and report back at the next DUFERC.

12. [REDACTED] presented a brief outline of the draft Kirkcudbright 1999 Terrestrial and draft Kirkcudbright 1998-99 Marine environmental survey reports. Copies were passed to [REDACTED] circulation with the minutes

Action 23/4: All members to review and submit comments as appropriate.

13. It was confirmed that there are currently no DU firings at Kirkcudbright after October 2001 but that there may be some, very minor, work after that date.

Item 6: Recent Parliamentary Questions

14. [REDACTED] said that there had been some Ministerial interest but very few PQs during the past 3-4 months. Some enquiries from the GVIU had been referred to [REDACTED]

Item 7: DU Gardens

15. [REDACTED] passed a copy of her report to the Secretary for circulation with the minutes, and gave a short presentation on progress to date, including the establishing of the DU garden at Kirkcudbright.
16. Due to a surprising lack of sediment cover at the chosen location, it had not been possible to conduct the 'drop' test with a DU projectile and it may also be necessary to move the whole garden for the same reason, if the NDG could again offer assistance.
17. The problem of removing oxides without also damaging or removing extra DU has not yet been resolved and organic chemistry is now being considered.

Item 8: RWMAC Visit to Eskmeals

18. Several members of the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee had recently visited Eskmeals. It was felt that there were no areas of any real concern, all but one of their questions having been answered to their (apparent) satisfaction.
19. The unanswered question referred to DERA's radioactive waste disposal policy. It was subsequently confirmed that there is no policy as such, but that DERA effectively conforms to MoD policy by following the requirements of JSPs 392 and 418. This response, with relevant extracts from the JSPs, has been passed to the RWMAC and no further comment has yet been made.
20. [REDACTED] said that an initial draft report should be issued by RWMAC in late September/early October and this would allow comments to be made, and factual accuracy to be checked, prior to the final report being issued.

Now due - early 2001

- [REDACTED]
21. It was also thought possible that other questions could be raised in the report, covering plans for the future decommissioning of plant and resources, clearance levels and finance. Responses to these and any other questions that might be raised would need to be prepared quickly and would certainly need to be in place by the time that the report is publicly released.

Action 23/5: Eskmeals to review existing documentation covering decommissioning options for VJ Battery.

Item 9: Any Other Business

22. [REDACTED] noted a possible autumn visit to the UK by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said that limited funding might be made available to assist if the purpose of the visit, and a list of tasks, could be made available. This could tie in with proposals for a MoU between the US and UK on DU information exchange covering, among other things, collaborative working and a database of DU related reports.

Action 23/6: [REDACTED] to co-ordinate a 'task list' for Prof. Shelton and identify benefits from the proposed visit.

23. [REDACTED] noted the comment on a DU database and asked if this would impinge on the database to be funded by DBC - it would not as they are for different purposes although the two may complement each other.

Action 23/7: [REDACTED] to forward proposals to DBE by mid-September.

24. Gp.Capt. Lampard noted that the implications of PPP and the relationship between DRPS (which will be in RDERA) and the current Ranges Sector (which will be in NewDERA) had not been clarified but would most likely involve a commercial arrangement. [REDACTED] said that this would not cause problems as DRPS already hold a number of commercial contracts and the appropriate systems are already in place.

Item 10: Date of Next Meeting

25. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at DERA Eskmeals commencing at 1330 on Tuesday 21 November 2000, with lunch provided at 1230.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending, with special thanks to [REDACTED] and DRPS for their hospitality, and the meeting was closed at 1400.