

Minutes of the Forty Fourth Depleted Uranium Environmental Review Committee (DUFERC) Meeting held at QinetiQ Eskmeals on the 26 Sept 2006

Present:

[REDACTED] (Acting Chairman
 and Secretary)
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 SO2 RAD (CESO A)
 DSTL Focal Point DU
 MOD DTEG
 DSTL Senior Env. Scientist

Apologies; [REDACTED]

1. Introduction

██████████ welcomed the committee to Eskmeals for the 44th meeting of the DUFERC and invited the members of the committee to view the new VJ Facility after the meeting.

2. Previous minutes and Matters arising

It was agreed that the minutes of DUFERC 43 were accurate.

██████████ made the clarification that he was the QQ POC for enquiries regarding DERA DU issues

██████████ pointed out the minutes gave the wrong spelling of Lt Col Newell's name.

3. Actions

Action 41.3 ████████ to ensure that Radiation Safety and Environmental issues are addressed with regard to future firing of DU.

██████████ advised that the DGM IPT ISS was now ██████████ and that he was now fully aware of the importance of this aspect of future planning and that this was an IPT responsibility. The committee agreed that ██████████ had discharged this action

Action Closed

Action 41.4 [REDACTED] to Act as POC for BAE on a specific concern regarding a suspected DU exposure.

█████ gave an update regarding his actions and the committee agreed that he could not proceed further with this action

Action Complete

Action 42.1 [redacted] to approach Defence Estates (DE) with regard to the future (DU) land quality surveys (LQS) for MOD Range.

[redacted] has identified a point of contact within DE, [redacted] and is currently in discussion with him regarding this matter
[redacted] asked whether DUFERCs interest in this matter extended to what level of LQS was to be carried out.
[redacted] stated that the LQS for Kirkcudbright (KTA) was in fact an Outline Management Plan and was therefore a desktop survey- as such it would not discuss actions.

Action ongoing

Action 43.1 [redacted] to write to [redacted] copy to [redacted] (Defence Estates) and [redacted] regarding future use of DU at KTA.

[redacted] reported that a definitive letter had been forwarded to him DSG IPT ISS which he read out. The letter stated that there were no further plans to use the Raeberry Battery for DU firings. This means that phase 1 of the clean up of this battery can now be planned. He went on to inform the committee that the Head of Land Management within DE was [redacted] and the POC was [redacted]. SEPA would also have an interest in this matter and [redacted] would act as MOD lead on this matter.

[redacted] added that [redacted] was the MOD Scottish Environmental Team Contact.

[redacted] went on to state that the next use of KTA for ISS would be from Balig Battery in 2008

[redacted] asked if this would involve QQ

[redacted] said that he would like QQ to manage the Radiation Safety and Environmental issues but this would have to form part of the tasking from MOD DGM.

Action Complete

Action 43/2 [redacted] to write to [redacted] asking him to clarify the MODs long term plan for VJ

[redacted] replied in his absence that [redacted] had sent a letter to [redacted] asking for a statement regarding the MODs plans for VJ

Action Ongoing

Action 43.3 [redacted] to investigate the collection and disposal of DU contaminated sabots from Raeberry Battery

█████ reported that these sabots had been removed to the VJ facility at Eskmeals for monitoring and had since been disposed of.

█████ asked where contaminated items such as sabots were disposed of.

█████ confirmed that this would be BNG Drigg.

█████ stated that he would recommend that the collection, handling and disposal of sabots from DU firings should be included in the KTA Safety Brief

█████ went on to suggest that QQ Eskmeals could act as the disposal agent for MOD DGM

Action Closed

New Action 44.1 on █████ to investigate QQ as Disposal Agent for Contaminated Sabots

Action 43.4 █████ to produce RPA advice relating to BGS findings/report.

█████ stated that although DU was present the very low concentrations meant that there were no significant health issues. However the BGS report could give the impression to persons with little scientific knowledge that it contradicts the published environmental reports so it should be explained to the Local Authority

█████ stated that he felt that in view of the fact that it was not significant and was not a finding from the official environmental sampling regime it would not be sensible to raise the matter with the Local Authority

█████ said that he felt we should as our report had stated that DU was not present at this location and now a published scientific report stated that it was

█████ suggested that it should be sufficient simply to reference the BSG finding in the next report and qualify it against our findings.

█████ stated that he felt that this could lead to adverse PR issues.

█████ repeated that he was not happy with this position as the official environmental monitoring programme was quite clear in its ToR and it was equally clear that the BGS report was for a totally different purpose and was therefore not relevant to the bi-annual Environmental Monitoring Report.

█████ disagreed and stated that he felt that even a reference to it would not be considered sufficient.

█████ said that he felt the important issue was that the findings were so low as to be insignificant to health therefore only required a brief note to that effect

█████ agreed with █████ that it should be added as a foot note within the official report

█████ agreed but stated that he thought that even mentioning the other report would cloud the issue.

█████ suggested that he could approach the MOD for guidance.

█████ replied that this was an issue for █████ and DUFERC to lead on
█████ motioned that █████ should write a footnote on the matter and pass it
to █████ for approval

New Action 44.2 █████ to produce the foot note and submit
to █████ for approval.

Action 43.5 █████ to obtain update from █████ regarding future
monitoring strategy for KTA

█████ present at meeting to give presentation.

Action complete

Action 43.6 █████ to progress Eskmeals environmental reports.

Reports now published

Action complete

Action 43.7 █████ to ensure the █████ is invited to
meeting 44.

█████ attending on his behalf

Action complete

Action 43.8 █████ to ensure that legal and public perception issues
regarding planned DU work at Shoeburyness are addressed by
MOD.

█████ reported that he has discussed these issues and there is an
awareness of the importance of the legal and public perception issues

Action complete

Action 43.9 █████ to contact CESO and DTEG to clarify who is
responsible for distributing the official DU Environmental
Reports.

█████ reported that he had discussed this matter. It would appear that
with regard to the KTA reports that 25 copies should go to the House
of Commons library and 12 should go to stakeholders such as Army,
QQ, and SEPA etc. He suggested that in future DSTL as the producer
should distribute them and that he would task them to do this.

█████ asked if this included the Eskmeals Environmental Reports

█████ said that this would depend on who the customer is

█████ stated that QQ were the customer but acting on behalf of MOD

█████ said that he would obtain the protocol and would work with █████
with tasking DSTL with distributing these reports as well.

█████ asked who is the PoC at DSTL for these reports

█████ replied that the PoC was currently █████

Action ongoing

Action 43.10 to ensure that DUFERC ToR are included in the agenda for meeting 44

Action complete

4 Kirkcudbright Report.

In the absence of there was no report from KTA, however the following was discussed.

asked what the current strategy for decontamination of the ranges at KTA was.

replied that as the evidence (ref Act 43.1) was that there would be no further DU firings from Raeberry Battery we were in effect at phase 1

clarified that the onus was on Defence Estates (DE)

stated that should call for a meeting between himself as camp Commandant, HQ Scotland (MOD) and DE

New Action 44.3 on to call for a meeting with HQ Scot and DE to discuss and report to DUFERC

asked if there were any such plans for VJ

said this should become clearer when DTEG replied to's letter (ref Act 43.2)

Post Meeting Notes

There have been no DU firings at KTA since the last meeting

Next scheduled DU firing at KTA 20th Jan 2013 (36 rounds)

On the 15th August 2006 of DSTL visited the KTA to carry out a survey of the DU sampling sites.

On the 2nd - 9th October and the environmental sampling team will visit to carry out the programmed marine and terrestrial sampling.

On the 18th - 19th October the SUERC/NERC team led by will visit with to carry out sampling in the area of Raeberry Battery.

On the 24th October and a smaller team will return to continue their work

5 Eskmeals Report.

reported that on the following:-

Operation Diamond: A contractor, the Active Collection Bureau had been approached by DTEG and had visited the site with a view to shipping the DU holding to the USA. A price had been agreed and the contractual arrangements were due to be signed off in the very near future

Challenger Ammunition Decontamination: DSTL had been identified as the organisation that was going to carry out this process. A suitable building within the controlled area had been prepared for this and work was due to start in November.

Challenger Trailer: The trailer has been assessed as lightly contaminated and possible to decontaminate and is to be used for testing the effectiveness of the decontamination plant. If decontamination is successful it is to be removed from the decontamination bay before the end of October.

Scimitars: When the trailer is removed these two vehicles are to be removed from their iso-freight containers and into the decontamination bay for radioactive characterisation. It is planned that this will take place in the first week in November

Challenger MBT: It is planned that the blocks surrounding the MBT will be removed during the second week in November.

6 DSTL Report

████ and █████ presented the following report:-

████ reported: █████ report on DU corrosion was finished and would be published as soon as it had finished its peer review.

BGS report on Eskmeals was complete- he had read it and the only major concern he had to report was that the oxides found below the surface of the soil at VJ were of a respirable size. This was contrary to previous belief.

DU in Urine: Mass spectrometry could now accurately detect exposure to DU particulate several years (typically 20 years) after a significant exposure

In Court: █████ is to give evidence at Leeds Crown Court on a DU related case, he will report on outcome.

████ gave a report on the DSTL proposals for changes to the *KTA monitoring programme*. In short this is a reduction in the number of soil samples and an increase in the number of sediments samples. It is proposed to run both the old and the new strategies in tandem for 2006 to allow for the change over and to use the new approach alone from 2007.

████ asked if the new strategy had been proposed to SEPA

████ replied that as the plan was to do both this year the new strategy was an extra so therefore did not need approval. When we have the results of both they will be submitted to SEPA for comparison and hopefully approval of the changes. He went on to state that we were compelled to seek agreement from the regulator

████ agreed that this was a sensible approach and it would also give them the opportunity to participate in the final structure of the sampling protocol. However they may wish to see a mixture of both.

████ pointed out that the regulators in this case should include the local authority but it would be wise to gain agreement from SEPA and the LA would almost certainly follow that lead.

████ agreed

████ suggested that the consultation should start with an informal presentation

████ recommended that this would be an ideal time to discuss the BSG report and to show that we were responding to it with a change of sampling protocol

████ asked if the new approach would include non livestock samples i.e. game etc.

████ said that from a sampling point of view fox offal was a good indicator as the predator feeds from a wide selection of species that grazed over a wide area.

████ said that although faeces were currently collected this was no longer considered to be a good indicator and a preferred option would be kidneys as there were good models of contamination for this as a target organ

████ pointed out that if you were to get a positive sample it would present an interesting PR problem

████ agreed but pointed out that a positive faecal was even less traceable

████ asked if samples from livestock would be required

████ replied that as livestock were not grazed on the areas in question such samples would not be relevant

████ asked if it would be appropriate to take game samples from the Eskmeals area

████ replied that he thought it would

████ asked if it would therefore be necessary to review the Eskmeals protocol

████ stated that this is planned and had been discussed in principal with EA but would need to be planned in detail

7 Shoeburyness

The proposed DU work at Shoeburyness has not started -nothing new to report

8 DUFERC Term of Reference

The DUFERC terms of reference (ToR) were discussed at the meeting and it was apparent that they had not been reviewed for several years, in fact the standing ToR still refer to DERA.

These were used during the meeting as a basis for discussion and the amended ToRs are attached for ratification at the next meeting.

9 Any other Business

████ asked if the collecting of sabots post firing at KTA was related to aluminium toxicity.

████ replied that it had been historically carried out at KTA because of concerns relating to injury of livestock rather than of a concern about toxicity

10 Date of next meeting

The next DUFERC meeting will therefore be held at 10:00, on Wednesday, 17th January 2007, at Farnborough

Summary of outstanding actions

Action 42.1 [REDACTED] to approach Defence Estates on the subject of future (DU) land quality surveys for MOD ranges.

Action 41.4 [REDACTED] to act as a point of contact to BAE on employee health concern over DU

Action 43.2 [REDACTED] to write to [REDACTED] asking him to clarify the MOD long term plan for VJ Area.

Action 43.9 [REDACTED] to contact CESO and DTEG to clarify who is responsible for the distribution of DU Environmental Reports.

Action 44.1 [REDACTED] to investigate feasibility of using QinetiQ as MOD's disposal agent for DU contaminated sabots

Action 44.2 [REDACTED] to produce footnote for the next KTA Environmental Monitoring Report referring the BGS Report.

Action 44.3 [REDACTED] to call for a meeting with MOD HQ Scotland and MOD Defence Estates regarding remediation of DU contaminated land at KTA

Distribution:

All present+

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Eskmeals

[REDACTED] MOD VPU

[REDACTED] DSC MOD

[REDACTED] MOD Commandant KKA

File ESK/327/001

[REDACTED]
27/11/06