

Minutes of the 52nd Depleted Uranium Firing Environmental Review Committee (DUFERC) Meeting held at Kirkcudbright Training Area on the 13th May 2009

Present:

Mr D. [REDACTED] (DUU)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (MP)

[REDACTED] (ND)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chief of [REDACTED] (State)

Dstl Environmental Sciences Department Principal Scientist

SO2 RAD (CESOA)

MOD Commandant KTA

MOD DE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Director of [REDACTED] Advisor

Apologies:

[REDACTED]

MOD TEST IPT

1. Introduction

[REDACTED] welcomed the committee to the Kirkcudbright Training Area for the 52nd meeting of the DUFERC and thanked [REDACTED] for hosting the meeting.

2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

[REDACTED] Advised the committee that [REDACTED], who was representing CESOA at the DUFERC Meeting on 24th September 2008 had been listed as a member of the DUFERC however she wished the committee to know that she would not be attending future DUFERC meetings.

The rest of the minutes of the 51st DUFERC Meeting were approved by the committee.

3. Actions

Action 49.4 – [REDACTED] to check if there was any debrief following the DU firing trial at Kirkcudbright during March 2008 and, if there was, whether [REDACTED] was invited to it.

The answer is no.

Action Complete

Action 50.2 – [REDACTED] to ask [REDACTED] to carry out a review of the trial file for the above to ensure that it tells the whole story i.e. to ensure that it gives all the information that would be required by a Trials Manager to carry out a DU trial.

[REDACTED] reported that he has carried out a review of the trial file and the information is generally very good, however does not capture the protocol for carrying out a trial involving the use of DU munitions. To remedy this short-coming he has of met with the key players involved with the trial to bring the information together. Additionally members of his staff are undertaking a review of standing orders to ensure that by the next meeting of the DUFERC he should have some information to present to the committee.

[REDACTED] went on to state that he wanted to make the trials file a conduit to turn personal experience into corporate knowledge.

[REDACTED] agreed that there are so many bodies involved in a trial that it made it difficult manage peripheral information such as PR, media and environmental issues. It was a case of who should take the lead on such issues?

The committee was agreed that the responsibility was primarily that of the IPT who initiates the task and they have to give the minister a justification for the task.

█████ stated that he would want to make sure that QinetiQ, as the organisation tasked with carrying out the trial would be able to supply a comprehensive instruction to future trials managers carrying out DU trials. The trials file would seem the logical place hold evidence

of trials from the past. █████ suggested that the Ammunition IPT should have the main copy but █████ felt this could get lost very quickly.

█████ recommended that Eskmeals should hold the trial file.

Action Complete

New Action 52.1 - █████ to draft a paper for the next meeting for members to review giving details of the findings of the review of the trial file.

New Action 52.2 - █████ to bring a draft standing order to the next meeting which will be extended to include timeline.

Action 51.1 - █████ to write a letter to █████ and to the EA indicating the proposal to change the coverage of High Volume Air Samplers (HVAS) and giving a justification for the proposal.

Letter sent to █████ and to the █████.

Action Complete

New Action 52.3 - █████ to circulate █████ comments to the DUFERC members.

█████ indicated that we had failed to send the minutes to █████, Deputy Director, Directorate of Safety and Claims, MOD.

New Action 52.4 - █████ to send a copy of the minutes of the 51st DUFERC Meeting to █████.

Action 51.2 - █████ to email to █████ a copy of the 'SO1 DTE at Warminster' report who will then give a copy to Dumfries & Galloway Council and email a copy to █████. █████ would send DUFERC results to Dumfries & Galloway Council but nothing else.

Action Cancelled

Action 51.3 - █████ to send a copy of Dstl's Standard Operating Procedures for carrying out DU surveys at Kirkcudbright to █████ and █████.

█████ handed out a █████ to everyone containing Dstl's Standard Operating Procedures for carrying out DU surveys at Kirkcudbright. The CD also included information on corrosion research work and contamination of the firing pen. █████ has still not heard anything about NRC work.

Action Complete

Action 51.4 █████ to show the information in the DUFERC Investigation and Action Levels Report in a graphic way at the next DUFERC meeting.

█████ handed out a graph to all the DUFERC members entitled 'DUFERC Levels & Benchmark Quantities'. The range of values was so great that █████ put it on a logarithmic scale.

It was agreed by the committee that this format was a good format for demonstrating the range of levels to be observed. █████ went on to explain the difficulties presented by interpreting results from areas with non uniform (or patchy) contamination.

█████ went on to comment that with the VJ (DU) range at Eskmeals moving towards decommissioning that the clean-up levels should be lower than the action levels. However

the Environment Agency (EA) might wish to enforce DUFERC investigation levels for clean-up criteria.

█████ stated that Defence Estates clean-up to the level that is required with regard to the planned usage of the site. He added the DUFERC action levels are very conservative and if they are breached part of the action is to make it clear that the figures are conservative and any actions taken need to be proportionate.

█████ suggested that the natural radiation level be added to those on the graph to put all of the figures into perspective.

█████ stated that we need to decide whether these figures have any implications in the future. █████ added he was relaxed to have these figures provided we are not stuck with them when we come to do clean-up.

█████ Stated Defence Estates currently use national levels (RSA) in the clean-up. █████

█████ is involved with the VJ project and █████ will be getting in touch with him to discuss this issue. What happens at Eskmeals may well be used as a model for other areas.

█████ stated that there were currently no political or commercial pressures to do the clean-up at Eskmeals. All Eskmeals has declared to the EA is that we will remove the free standing waste items from the controlled area. █████ stated that the EA, HSE and other organisations have different interpretations on the figures. █████ stated that over the coming week, discussions between QinetiQ, EA and MoD Test will take on a new significance.

Action On-going

Action 51.5 - DUFERC members to send comments about the DUFERC Investigation and Action Levels Report to █████ before the next DUFERC meeting.

█████ confirmed that he has sent his comments about the report to █████ and the rest of the committee and reiterated that on balance he felt that we should retain the existing levels.

█████ stated that he would prefer to stay with the existing action levels as long as we can disconnect from contamination levels.

█████ stated that he was happy to leave it as it is and that we should stay as we are and manage it with the report with regards to explaining why figures may be higher.

█████ stated that we should leave the report as is.

█████ stated that we do not want to raise the profile and that he was happy to leave it as it is but we do need to look at the disconnection process. █████ will look at the feasibility of an Integrated Management Plan for Kirkcudbright. █████ added that it would be good to know what costs would be for cleaning up in the long term from the client perspective.

█████ stated that when the first surveys were presented to the Dumfries and Galloway Council, the council stated that it would not be happy to see HGVs (or other vehicles) moving any contaminated materials on the local roads about as this could raise public perception issues.

█████ stated that the committee considered the arguments about the figures put into the two discussion documents and agreed to maintain them as they are now.

Action Complete

4. Kirkcudbright Report

█████ stated that his current concern is that the fences surrounding the contaminated ground at Raebury are in need of renewal.

Additionally there is a routine environmental survey taking place in June 2009

Range Boats – This contract has just under a year to run. █████ who was skipper, has retired. █████ has taken over the contract.

5. Eskmeals Report

presented the report which presents information which would be of interest to the committee.

The VJ decommissioning project is now into phase one- decontamination and disposal of all non structural items within the controlled area. QinetiQ have been tasked by MoD to start remediation work. A catalogue of the items requiring decontamination/disposal was produced a few weeks ago. The contract has been awarded to Amec Ltd and went live on 5th May 2009. Amec will be on site by the end of May 2009 to start the process. A CDM Co-ordinator has now been appointed. It is planned that all of the Low Level Radioactive Waste (LLW) will have been transported to the National LLW Repository at Drigg by 29th January 2010. This should mark the completion of phase one of decommissioning.

QinetiQ Health Physics staff have begun the survey of the path of the new road that will enable heavy plant to access the Butts within the controlled area. When this is complete QinetiQ Radiation Advisor will carry out the prior risk assessment that will lay out the working precautions for AMEY to begin work on the road

The Project Manager () will be invited to the next (53rd) DUFERC to give a presentation on the progress of the VJ Project.

A meeting is planned to take place with the EA on Friday 15th May 2009 at Eskmeals to keep the regulator aware of progress on the project.

6. Dstl Report

presented the report which presents information which would be of interest to the committee. A copy of the report has been emailed out to all DUFERC members.

Ministerial and Public Correspondence

The public and media interest in DU is continuing at approximately the same level. There is agitation within the UN on the UK decision to vote against UN resolutions calling for a moratorium or ban on the use of DU munitions and for further international research.

The following issues were also raised:

- Reliability of epidemiological studies for investigating stochastic effects.
- Increasing international concern over DU munitions use.
- Questions about how reliable the studies are that the MoD have put out and the existence of data gaps which give rise to uncertainty in studies by the Royal Society and other expert group.
- Ill health in Iraq still continuing.
- Battlefield remediation.
- Findings of animal and in-vitro experiments which suggest effects not seen in human populations.
- Progress on finding alternatives to DU.
- Anti DU campaigners being presented with information but put it into a different context.
- Transport of DU munitions in Scotland – The Scottish Executive raised some questions about safety in this area.

New Action 52.5 - to email out to DUFERC members the information about the Scottish Executive's concerns about safety during the transport of DU munitions in Scotland.

It is two years since DUFERC representatives met with the Head of Radioactive Waste (██████████). ██████ asked- Should we offer them another chance to meet up? Her department already has the overall picture so it would be advantageous to offer to meet. To discuss the specific subject of DU waste

Technical Reports and Issues

SEPA – Risks of radium contamination from work carried out by SEPA continue.

HSE Nuclear Directorate has published information on H&S in power stations.

Defence munitions have another initiative to get rid of outstanding Phalanx ammunition. This is at concept stage and ██████ has been advising them on the legislation involved.

Dense Inert Metal Explosives

These do not contain DU. But the inference is they do. This is generating some bad PR at present.

Summary

DSTL are still a getting a trickle of DU enquiries, the subject of which have been dealt with before however the nature of the questioning is far more technically and politically astute.

7. Any other Business

No issues were raised.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10:00 hrs on Tuesday 22nd September at Eskmeals.

Distribution: All present+

██████████ - MOD TEST IPT

File ESK/327/001

██████████
31/07/2009

Summary of Outstanding Actions

Action 51.4 - [REDACTED] to show the DUFERC members the information within the 'DUFERC Investigation and Action Levels Report', in a graphic way, at the next DUFERC meeting.

Action 52.1 - [REDACTED] to draft a paper for the next meeting for members to review giving details of the findings of the review of the trial file.

Action 52.2 - [REDACTED] to bring a draft standing order to the next meeting which will be extended to include timeline.

Action 52.3 - [REDACTED] to screen the comments which [REDACTED] circulated around the DUFERC members expressing his concerns about the letter.

Action 52.4 - [REDACTED] to send a copy of the minutes of the 51st DUFERC Meeting to [REDACTED].

Action 52.5 - [REDACTED] to email out to DUFERC members the information about the Scottish Executive's concerns about safety during the transport of DU munitions in Scotland.