

Minutes of the 50th Depleted Uranium Firing Environmental Review Committee (DUFERC) Meeting held at Netheravon Airfield Camp on the 24th September 2008

Present:

[REDACTED] (TG)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (AG)

[REDACTED] (KS)

[REDACTED] (Chairman)

MOD TEST IPT

SO2 RAD (CESOA)

MOD DE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Apologies:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dstl Environmental Sciences Department Principal Scientist

MOD Commandant KTA

Range Officer KTA

[REDACTED] Capability Manager

1. Introduction

[REDACTED] welcomed the committee to Netheravon Airfield Camp for the 50th meeting of the DUFERC. The 50th meeting is quite a milestone as the DUFERC Meetings have proved to be a very good means of cross-party communication and co-operation over the 15 years that they have been taking place.

[REDACTED] thanked [REDACTED] for hosting the meeting at Netheravon.

2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

Action 49.2 on Page 3 – Actionee should have been [REDACTED] and not [REDACTED].

Action 49.10 – [REDACTED] was going to write to the MoD only, he was not going to write to the DS&C aswell.

Paragraph 5 on Page 2 – Incorrect spelling of location where provisional advice on media response to questions raised is currently obtained. The location should have been Craigiehall and not Craggy Hall.

The rest of the minutes of the 49th DUFERC Meeting were approved by everyone.

3. Actions

Action 44.1 – Feasibility of using QinetiQ as MoD's disposal agent for DU contaminated items - [REDACTED] to raise with the QinetiQ Project Manager the matters of possible contamination of the gun barrel and the requirement for monitoring and the possibility of MoD using one of the existing contaminated barrels held by QinetiQ. The QinetiQ Project Manager needs to make sure the clearing of the sabots and barrel monitoring/use is included in the plan.

A QinetiQ project manager has been assigned to this task and a disposal plan for these items has been developed. The barrels previously used for test and development of the 120 APFSDS DU round have previously been separated from the ancillary equipment and stored at Eskmeals and Shoeburyness. All 55 of the gun barrels covered by this project are now at Eskmeals for monitoring and disposal. Monitoring results taken from the gun

history books suggests that 5 barrels have significant contamination remaining on the inside surfaces. However conformation monitoring will be carried out of all barrels prior to release. Any contaminated barrels will be processed through the VJ facility to either decontaminate them to a level that can be released as scrap metal or, alternatively the contaminated barrels will be size reduced in such a way as to segregate the contaminated sections as Low Level Waste (LLW) thus minimising the amount of waste sent to the LLW repository at Drigg.

It is generally considered that contamination occurs only during test firing however as a precaution all service barrels have been monitored by Dstl and subsequently released back to the army for unrestricted use.

Contamination can also occur on approximately 20% of fired sabots. Therefore strenuous efforts are made during DU firing trials to recover all sabots for monitoring. The DU contaminated sabots are all currently held at Eskmeals, as the contamination is on exposed surfaces, will be relatively easy to decontaminate.

██████ has made enquires within the army but has not, as yet come across any remaining DU contamination items held by them. However he agreed to enquire if the army had any requirement to use this disposal route.

Action Ongoing

New Action 50.1 - ██████ to write to HQDRA Director of Royal Army Corps to inquire if he has any issues on disposal. In the letter, ██████ will advise that QinetiQ/Mod have a disposal route for certain DU contaminated item and the MoD Army may be able to use it.

Action 45.1 - ██████ to get ██████ contact details from ██████ and draft a letter to him, copy to ██████ highlighting the issue to him.

██████ is now a member of the DUFERC

Action Closed

Action 49.1 - ██████ to go back to the authors of the report which shows high levels of DU in the controlled area and clarify if it is a 'wash off area' or 'wash down area'.

██████ is now clear where the reported contaminated area is and as it is within the area at VJ and listed for remediation no further action is considered necessary.

Action Complete

Action 49.2 - ██████ to send a copy of the report to Defence Estates.

██████ has now received a copy of the British Geological Society Report.

Action Complete

Action 49.3 - ██████ to determine the level of sampling to be done in the area.

A further outcome might be a modification of the sampling programme however in view of the proposed decommissioning there will be a need to review the Eskmeals environmental sampling programme.

██████ explained that currently QinetiQ carry out the sampling and Dstl are responsible for the sample analysis (and production of the reports). The location of the sampling points for the programme was relevant for firing but many of these points are now too far from the point of discharge. He considers that any future programme will need to bring some of the sample points in a lot closer to the VJ site.

█████ stated that a similar review was done at Kirkcudbright by Dstl and agreed by SEPA and the findings were not what they expected.

Action Ongoing

Action 49.4 – █████ to check if there was any debrief following the firing and, if there was, whether █████ was invited to it.

█████ reported that he had asked █████ if she had been approached for her input into any report but she had said that she had not been asked.

█████ stated that it is part of the trial procedures to carry out a debrief in order to capture all information regarding the trial to be put into the report. █████'s health physics information for this trial was important and she should have been invited to contribute

Action Ongoing

New Action 50.2 – █████ to ask █████ to carry out a review of the trial file to ensure that it tells the whole story i.e. to ensure that it gives us all the information that we require? It needs to be looked at from the point of view of a Project Manager.

Action 49.5 – █████ to ask █████ to add a digest of the trial.

Action Ongoing

Action 49.6 – █████ to place the minutes of the 49th DUFERC Meeting in the 2007 Environmental Report to show that the issues raised within it are being dealt with.

Action Ongoing

Action 49.7 – █████ to ask Dstl what is a reasonable target time for getting results following the sample collection and the rationale for the target time.

Unfortunately █████ was not present at this meeting but he emailed an apology, in addition he also emailed a report that he had put together entitled 'Dstl Analysis of Environmental Samples for DU Content and Reporting of Results' which gave details about sample analysis timescales. The report stated that 150 out of the 185 samples received on 8th May 08 from Eskmeals had been analysed by 15th August 08. At present, Dstl aim to have all environmental samples from Eskmeals and Kirkcudbright analysed by the end of the Financial Year in which they were collected. The report also stated that it is recognised that more information on the progress of the reports would be helpful to the Departments involved and measures are being introduced to ensure this happens in future. The report went on to say that, in summary, under optimum conditions, it is suggested that the aim should be for all annual monitoring reports to be completed by mid-June in the following year. A full copy of the report attached below.



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My Documents\C\DU

Action Complete

█████ stated that Dstl have previously had a big backlog of reports which accounted for some of the delays in producing the reports. However it is extremely important that these reports are produced in a timely manner. The army therefore expect final delivery of the report within 6 months.

New Action 50.3 – █████ to write to █████ with a view to agreeing an acceptable timescale for the delivery of the Eskmeals and Kirkcudbright reports. █████ to discuss the issue with █████

Action 49.8 - [redacted] to put together a draft statement on what we are going to do about the issues that have been brought up in the DUFERC and [redacted] to circulate the statement to DUFERC members.

Action Ongoing

New Action 50.4 - [redacted] to email TOR of RPPDC (Radiation Protection Policy Development Committee) to [redacted] for inclusion in the DUFERC minutes and circulation to the DUFERC members. TOR attached below.



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Action 49.9 - [redacted] will ask if it is possible for DUFERC members to see all the following reports:-

- a) Corrosion of DU in Marine Environment
- b) Corrosion of DU on Land at Eskmeals and Kirkcudbright
- c) Finalised NERC Summary Report.

Action Ongoing

Action 49.10 - [redacted] to write to the MoD to ask who has the interest in maintaining the scientific point of contact for DU issues. [redacted] to also write to DS&C to ask about the funding of scientific expert advice on DU or other investing for the future.

[redacted] has spoken to DS&C. [redacted] is the only specialist that DS&C have. Dstl will find that if [redacted] is not there the work will still continue. It is an internal issue for Dstl to find someone to take over from [redacted] when he leaves.

Action Complete

New Action 50.5 - [redacted] to raise the issue of finding a successor to [redacted] who will be a scientific point of contact for DU issues, at the next RPPDC Meeting.

4. Kirkcudbright Report

[redacted] stated that he was told that he was going to be sent a Kirkcudbright Report by [redacted] but he has not seen anything. [redacted] stated that he had received an email from [redacted] with a report attached. The email states that the sampling would be completed in 6 months. [redacted] stated that if any contamination got into the environment and it was found that sampling had taken 6 months it may be hard to justify.

New Action 50.6 - [redacted] and [redacted] to draft and circulate to DUFERC members a letter to Test IPT expressing our concerns about the length of time it is taking them to complete the sampling and emphasising that they must get their act together and complete the sampling as soon as possible.

New Action 50.7 - [redacted] to contact Tank Systems IPT about DU firings and a revised set of weights.

5. Eskmeals Report

presented the report.

All the ammunition at Eskmeals, from the Challenger vehicle, has been removed by AWE for re-processing. The Phalanx ammunition recovered from the Scimitar was the last to be removed and went in June 08.

55 120mm gun barrels will be monitored and disposed of by January 09. the VJ Facility Manager is waiting for the go-ahead from the Project Manager.

It has now been made clear that the decommissioning of VJ falls into two phases under two departments of the MOD.

- 1) Test IPT will be responsible for the removal of non structural fixed items as either scrap or Low Level Radioactive Waste (LLW)
- 2) Defence Estates will be responsible for decommissioning ie the dismantling and removal of the VJ Battery to either Brown or Green Field conditions

Go-ahead has been given for Phase 1 'Clear up of scrap'. The MOD already have allocated space in the LLW facility at Drigg, although this allocation is held by a different department it will be made available for all LLW arisings from both phases. Non contaminated material will be disposed of as either landfill or where practical be recycled. QinetiQ will not be submitting a bid as the work will be carried out by subcontractors under the supervision of the QinetiQ Health Physics team.

On the 24th June 08 QinetiQ held an Industry Day during which potential bidders for the Phase 1 work were invited to see the facility and were given a presentation by the SDS Project Manager regarding the scope of the work. Several companies have now submitted bids and these are now being assessed by a team including the bid system is a standard scoring which is based on competency, value for money and compliance. The current timescale for starting work on the facility is January 09. The QinetiQ TECS input to the project will be to oversee the H&S aspects and to manage the controlled area. The Environment Agency is aware of the proposed work and are currently happy for the process to continue. Although they are not yet aware of the plan to use subcontractors they will be notified of this development when a contractor is selected. Eskmeals currently has authorisation for the accumulation and disposal of radioactive waste from the disposing vehicles contract and although this will need to be amended the Environment Agency feels that as there a similarity between the two processes a letter explaining the proposal should be sufficient for them to produce a new authorisation to cover this project.

6. Dstl Report

not present at the meeting to present the Dstl report.

7. Any other Business

- High Volume Air Sampling (HVAS) strategy at Eskmeals — asked if we needed to look at what monitoring is required for Phase 2. stated that we currently run 7 high volume air samplers. These units were originally placed to monitor the radiological impact of DU firings on the local population. As the usage of the battery ceased in 1995 the positioning of the samplers is in need of review. Ideally the HVAS programme should be reviewed before the structural decommissioning (phase 2) is carried but it could-if necessary remain as is for phase 1.
- Drainage of VJButts — Flooding of the VJ Butt apron is now becoming a problem. Amey have inspected the drains and it would appear that the final discharge pipe is now choked with fine particulate (sludge). Although this sludge has not yet been sampled it is probable that the drain will have concentrated the DU particles suspended contaminated effluent discharged through this drain. Such contamination

will put the remedial work outside of the scope of Amey's maintenance contract and into that of the decommissioning. It must also be assumed that any work to repair the drains will create a significant quantity of radioactive LLW.

- [redacted] stated. SEPA are adopting a policy which could result in Kirkcudbright being designated contaminated land in Scotland. It is therefore likely that this will result in some media interest. DS&C are currently discussing extending the Memo of Understanding they have with the Environment Agency to include SEPA. The DUFERC may want to find out more information about these discussions as DS&C may require the DUFERCs specialist input.
- Kirkcudbright Environmental Report 2007 - [redacted] stated that a circulation of this report should be looked at. [redacted] stated that SEPA and Head of Radiation Waste, [redacted] will now get a copy of this report.
- [redacted] notified the committee that there is a small DU project about to be carried out at Fort Halstead involving Phalanx ammunition. He has had full involvement with the project as an advisor and is overseeing the work as their RPS.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10:30 hrs on Wednesday 21st January 2009 at Alverstoke.

Distribution: All present+

[redacted] - Dstl ESD Chief Scientist
[redacted] - Range Officer KTA
[redacted] - Deputy Director of DSC
[redacted] - MoD VPU
[redacted] - MoD DE and S
[redacted] - MoD (GVU)
File ESK/327/001

[redacted]
24/12/2008

Summary of Outstanding Actions

✓ Action 44.1 – Feasibility of using QinetiQ as MoD's disposal agent for DU contaminated items – [redacted] to raise with the QinetiQ Project Manager the matters of possible contamination of the gun barrel and the requirement for monitoring and the possibility of MoD using one of the existing contaminated barrels held by QinetiQ. The QinetiQ Project Manager needs to make sure the clearing of the sabots and barrel monitoring/use is included in the plan.

✓ Action 45.1 – [redacted] to get IR's contact details from ND and draft a letter to him, copy to Andrew Moffet, highlighting the issue to him.

✓ Action 49.2 – [redacted] to send a copy of the report to Defence Estates.

✓ Action 49.3 – [redacted] to determine the level of sampling to be done in the area.

Action 49.4 – [redacted] to check if there was a debrief following the firing and, if there was, whether [redacted] was invited to it.

✓ Action 49.5 – [redacted] to ask [redacted] to add a digest of the trial.

✓ Action 49.6 – [redacted] to place the minutes of the 49th DUFERC Meeting in the 2007 Kirkcudbright Environmental Report to show that the issues raised are being dealt with.

✓ Action 49.8 – [redacted] to put together a draft statement on what we are going to do about the issues that have been brought up in the DUFERC Report and [redacted] to circulate it to DUFERC members.

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- c) Finalised NERC Summary Report.

✓ Action 50.1 – [redacted] to write to HQDRA Director of Royal Army Corps to inquire if he has any issues on disposal. In the letter, [redacted] to state that QinetiQ have a likely disposal route and the MoD is welcome to use it.

✓ Action 50.2 – [redacted] to ask [redacted] to carry out a review of the trial file to ensure that it tells the whole story i.e. to ensure that it gives us all the information that we require? It needs to be looked at from the point of view of a Project Manager.

✓ Action 50.3 – [redacted] to write to [redacted] to ask him when a report is going to arrive. [redacted] also to chase [redacted] about this issue and [redacted] to discuss the issue with [redacted]

✓ Action 50.4 – [redacted] to email TOR of RPPDC (Radiation Protection Policy Development Committee) to [redacted] for inclusion in the DUFERC minutes and circulation to the DUFERC members.

✓ Action 50.5 – [redacted] to raise the issue of finding a successor to [redacted] who will be a scientific point of contact for DU issues, at the next RPPDC Meeting.

✓ Action 50.6 – [redacted] and [redacted] to draft and circulate to DUFERC members a letter to Test IPT expressing our concerns about the length of time it is taking them to complete the sampling and emphasising that they must get their act together and complete the sampling as soon as possible. [redacted] to then send the letter to [redacted] at Test IPT.

Action 50.7 – [redacted] to contact Tank Systems IPT about DU firings and a revised set of weights.