

Nuclear Free Local Authorities Secretariat

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Chair: Bailie George Regan Secretary: Sean Morris



(Officers name withheld for public version of letter)
Health and Safety Executive Nuclear Directorate
Building 4.N2, Redgrave Court
Merton Road, Bootle
Merseyside L20 7HS

5th August 2010

Dear Mr N,

FIRE INCIDENT AT ALDERMASTON, 3RD AUGUST 2010

I am writing to you to note the concern of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) to a fire incident in an explosives store at the AWE Aldermaston nuclear weapons facility on 3rd August 2010. It is our understanding that a member of staff was injured, the emergency services were on site for some considerable time, local members of the public were evacuated and roads were not fully re-opened until 11am the following day.

I understand the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are making initial inquiries into the incident to determine if a full inquiry is required. The NFLA would suggest, given all the details of the incident mentioned above, that a full, open, independent and transparent inquiry should take place and urges the HSE to undertake it. The NFLA would also like to see the findings of such an inquiry being made publicly available to ensure that all local and wider concerns are fully considered and emergency plans amended if required.

The NFLA would also like to be reassured that all on-site and off-site consequences of the incident are fully investigated and that all emergency planning arrangements checked. Given that the explosives store would contain a number of hazardous substances, the NFLA would also like to know if there was any possibility of a wider incident occurring that could have impacted on the radiological sections of the Aldermaston facility.

Given the HSE's public policies on open and transparent regulation, the NFLA would hope that all findings from the investigation are made publicly available. With a number of local member authorities in the area, the NFLA wishes to ensure that an updated risk assessment is undertaken as a result of this incident and local agencies are fully appraised in order to minimise all such risks.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Sean Morris
Secretary of UK and Republic of Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities