Scottish Government ‘Preparedness Review’ on nuclear weapon convoys

Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary
NFLA Scotland Forum seminar, September 2019
The concerns over nuclear weapon convoys
The push to get the Scottish Government to look at the issue
Core points of the Scottish Preparedness Review
Identified gaps in the report and other concerns
Other issues with nuclear transport – NFLA report
Nukewatch Scotland comments – over to David / Jane
Nuclear convoys – ICAN / NIS / Nukewatch

- 3 detailed and alarming reports ALL should read
- 22 ‘significant’ incidents with such transports
- Surrounded in secrecy – no LA / FS notifications and so no pre-planning
- Convoys go close to large cities and lots of vulnerable buildings / populations
- Exercise scenarios highlight real risks and communication problems
- “Accidents happen – its not if, but when”
- Councils not providing public information
- Scottish Government review welcomed by NFLA
Convoys – Local Authority concerns

- There needs to be greater engagement beyond the LAESI guidelines
- A major incident would impact heavily on Councils, but they get no pre-notification and are generally slower to react
- Most EPOs are security-cleared
- Local Authorities should look at providing the public with relevant information with other agencies
- Increased MOD secrecy raises concerns – is there something to hide?
Scottish Government Preparedness Review

- Review comes from Nukewatch / MSP pressure
- Develop by HMICS with Solace / Inspectorates
- Contacted all core emergency responders
- Concluded ‘strong plans’ for safe convoys in place
- Good cooperation between agencies
- ‘Fine tune’ 14 areas of improvement
- Minister welcomed report
- NFLA welcome report and glad it has been done
- Areas of improvement are more extensive than tone of the report suggests?
Areas of improvement (1)

- PHE – radiation emergency put strains on available resources
- Ambulance Service – challenge to source radiation equipment
- Ambulance / LA / Fire – not pre-informed of convoys by MOD
- Food Standards – would be a strain on existing resources
- Marine Scotland – clarify protocols for ‘safe collection, storage and transport of samples
- Fire Service – a number of emergency procedures had still be ‘finalised’ including operational guidance & intelligence sharing
- Police Scotland – criticised for only ‘verbal briefings’ for officers prior to convoy movement
- Police - lack of clarity over sharing sensitive information
- Councils – wider participation in training & exercises
These ‘improvements’ only come out of public pressure
How do these improvements get audited to check they are done?
Public information – the balance between ‘warning’ & ‘alarming’ needs to be considered – but then will the public be told at all of the risks of convoys / nuclear transports?
Public surveys show people want to know about them – ICAN report 67% did not know of them, 47% concerned
Generic public information should be given on convoys by Councils / emergency responders
Important to know that nuclear transports go past and through large urban areas
Next steps for NFLA

- Talk with Nukewatch / sympathetic MSPs over next steps
- Write to Scottish Government over the planning gaps
- Write to HMICS etc over public information issues
- Generate a debate in local Council EPUs over generic information and nuclear transports
- Link in with changes to REPPiR at nuclear sites – including Faslane, Aldermaston and Burghfield
- Clarify who gets invited to exercises and trained in Councils on convoys / nuclear transports
Independent review of nuclear transports to clarify role of Councils in an emergency incident is needed

Concern over defence transports with aging equipment & lack of specialist staff

Scottish Government review welcomed but more needed

NDA should review their transport strategy

ETW’s for Scotland should increase from 1 to 2

Transports are going rapidly up not down

While accidents remain low, the risk remains high

IT IS THE PUBLIC WHO ARE PUT AT MOST RISK FROM SUCH AN ACCIDENT
Over to Nukewatch Scotland...