



Sellafield Ltd

Sellafield News

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Historic shipment on its way to Japan



NEXT STOP JAPAN: the flask is taken from the train and placed on the Pacific Sandpiper

Sellafield Ltd's first transport of highly active waste (HAW) has departed the UK bound for Japan.

The waste arises from the reprocessing of Japanese used nuclear fuel at Sellafield.

A single 113tonne flask, containing 28 stainless steel containers of solid HAW, was transported from the Sellafield site on a specially constructed rail wagon to the port of Barrow-in-Furness.

It was then transferred on to a Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd (PNTL) vessel Pacific Sandpiper which departed for Japan. The voyage is scheduled to be completed in the first half of March 2010 and will travel via the Panama Canal. The shipment received international news coverage and is a major milestone for Sellafield Ltd, NDA and INS.

Mike Johnson, Director of Waste and Effluent Disposition for Sellafield Ltd, said: "This work, known in the UK as Vitrified Residue Returns programme, will deliver on the Government's policy and contractual obligations for return of waste to overseas customers.

"It demonstrates the ability of our workforce to safely prepare and deliver this material for transport, while meeting the most stringent national, international, and customer requirements." *Continued on page two*

From page one, Ian Hudson, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's Sellafield Programme Director said: "The commencement of this first return of high level waste to overseas customers is a significant milestone in meeting our contractual commitments and delivering on Government policy. The delivery of this programme is a prime example of high quality team working across the NDA estate."

All of the transports of HAW to Japan will be delivered by International Nuclear Services and its subsidiary, PNTL. PNTL has operated ships that travelled for more than five million miles without any incident involving the release of radioactivity.

In 2007 PNTL completed a programme of 12 similar HAW transports to Japan for the French nuclear industry.

Mark Jervis, Managing Director of INS, said: "The waste is being transported by sea which is a tried and tested method that is safe and secure, highly regulated and internationally approved.

"Japan will be the first customer to receive its HAW from the UK. The detailed arrangements for the transport have been put in place through discussions with customer and regulatory bodies in the UK and Japan."



BON VOYAGE: Mike Johnson wishes Mark Jervis well as the shipment gets set to sail.

Incident Reports

A worker in the Magnox complex noticed a liquid which appeared to be coming from one of the cell ventilation system sample lines which service the complex.

A closer inspection revealed that the sample valve was open and ventilation condensate was dripping onto an area of unmade ground inside the compound. The valve was close, stopping the drip, and secondary containment applied.

The drip was onto a ground in a controlled area and the radiological consequences to the workforce and environment are negligible.

Following the event the Head of Manufacturing pro-actively instigated a walk down of the full ventilation system which identified that there was also a minor drip on a Vessel Ventilation sample line. Health Physics surveys around both sample points detected some radioactivity on the ground.

The levels of surface contamination detected are low and do not pose a radiological risk to personnel.

The area affected is part of the separation area and is designated a Controlled Area under the Ionising radiations Regulations. Additional Health Physics surveys of other sample points are ongoing.

A review of scheduled maintenance has shown that all planned maintenance inspections have been carried out.

The event has been classified as below the International Nuclear Event scale.

A health physics survey of prior to maintenance work in the Flatrol Monitoring and Decontamination Facility in Magnox found higher than expected levels of contamination.

The arrangements for contamination control were consequently upgraded as appropriate to facilitate decontamination work. No personnel contamination, or spread beyond the flatrol, has been detected. Subsequent monitoring of the rail network has not found any contamination.

The event has been classified as below the International Nuclear Event scale.

VIP Visits to Sellafield

8.1.2010: The Bellona Foundation

12.1.2010: SLC/NDA/NMP Communications Group Members

14.1.2010 NDA Non Executive Directors

19.1.2010 and 20.1.2010 VRR Media and FETL visit

20.1.2010 BAE Systems

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