



Ministry
of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
FLOOR 5, ZONE B, MAIN BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 020 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

STUART ANDREW MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

PQW/17-19/2018/14833

19 December 2018

Dear Deidre

In my response to your recent questions on issues related to nuclear safety events in Faslane and Coulport, accident reports and fire on submarines (Official Record 29 November, Reference 194235, 194233, 194234, 194236, 194237, 194238, 194239, 194783 and 194788), I confirmed that I would write to you with a substantive response.

I hope that you will appreciate that the retrieval, examination and collation of records takes some time, but officials have now completed this process and I am in a position to provide you with a substantive reply.

Before I address your questions individually, you will recall that in my previous letter of 1 November 2018, I provided some context to the way in which Nuclear Site Event Reports (NSERs) were investigated and categorised. I would wish to reiterate that the identification and reporting of these low-level events and near misses is actively encouraged in line with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guidance for protecting people and the environment (IAEA Specific Safety Guide SSG-50 Operating Experience Feedback for Nuclear Installations, July 2018), since such data can provide valuable lessons to help avoid more significant events.

Turning to the information you requested:

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear safety events have occurred on vessels other than submarines at Faslane in each year since 2006. (194233)

Answer

The following NSERs were raised regarding other vessels (e.g. Primary Effluent Barge (PEB) or tug operations) other than submarines at Faslane in each year calendar year since 2006:

Deidre Brock MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	
2006	0	0	1	0	
2007	0	0	0	0	
2008	1	0	0	0	
2009	0	0	0	0	
2010	0	0	0	0	
2011	0	0	0	0	
2012	0	0	0	0	
2013	0	0	0	0	
2014	0	0	0	1	Below Scale
2015*	0	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	1	0
2017	0	0	0	0	0

* Updated categorisation criteria in November 2015

The one NSER assessed as Category A in 2008 was raised due to a possible escape of effluent from now a decommissioned PEB. Demineralised water was being pumped to the PEB when water was seen to issue from the Oily Bilge Tank overflow goosenecks. The operator reacted quickly to stop the pump, so only a few litres of water overflowed onto the foredeck. Subsequent sampling indicated low levels of Tritium and barely detectable amounts of Cobalt⁶⁰.

Both the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency were informed. The assessed release to the Gare Loch was less than 0.0001% of HMNB Clyde's approved annual discharge levels.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear safety events have occurred at Faslane in a location other than on board a vessel in each year since 2006. (194234)

Answer

The following NSERs were raised at Faslane in a location other than on board a vessel in each calendar year since 2006:

	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D
2006	0	5	5	1
2007	0	1	19	4
2008	0	2	18	4
2009	0	0	13	3
2010	0	0	7	15
2011	0	0	12	8
2012	0	0	18	10

2013	0	0	10	11	
2014	0	0	13	14	Below Scale
2015*	0	0	12	3	0
2016	0	0	3	5	9
2017	0	0	2	6	19

* Updated categorisation criteria in November 2015

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many leaks of radioactive coolant there have been from vessels other than submarines at Faslane in each year since 2006. (194235)

Answer

As outlined above one NSER was raised in 2008 regarding the possible escape of effluent from a Primary Effluent Barge, but there have been no leaks of primary effluent to the environment from any vessel or submarine at Faslane in the last ten years.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many leaks of radioactive coolant there have been at Faslane in locations other than on board a vessel in each year since 2006. (194236)

Answer

I can confirm that there have been no leaks of radioactive effluent to the environment from any other location ashore at Faslane since 2006. The transfer, treatment ashore and subsequent disposal of primary effluent is strictly controlled within bunded areas and design catchments to ensure that these are safely contained to protect personnel and the environment.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear safety events there have been at Coulport in each year since 2006. (194239)

Answer

The following NSERs were raised at Coulport in each calendar year since 2006:

	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D
2006	0	0	4	1
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	2	2
2009	0	2	6	0
2010	0	1	2	0

2011	0	0	1	0	
2012	0	0	0	0	
2013	0	0	0	1	
2014	0	0	3	3	Below Scale
2015*	0	0	2	0	0
2016	0	0	1	4	0
2017	0	0	2	1	0

* Updated categorisation criteria in November 2015

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many accidents were reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 at (a) HM Naval Base Clyde and (b) Royal Navy Armaments Depot Coulport in each of the last five years; and what the circumstances of each such accident were. (194783)

Answer

HMNB Clyde operates a common Single Event Reporting system covering injury accidents, near misses and hazard observations to encourage personnel irrespective of their role or organisation to identify safety and environmental issues. Incidents are subject to a tiered investigation process to identify root causes so that appropriate actions are taken to prevent reoccurrence.

Formal notifications to the Health and Safety Executive/Office of Nuclear Regulation under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) is the responsibility of the employer, but incidents reported for core Base staff and key Industry Partners' workers can be summarised as follows:

HM Naval Base Clyde – Faslane / Coulport

	Faslane		Coulport		Reportable Diseases
	Injury Reports	Dangerous Occurrences	Injury Reports	Dangerous Occurrences	
2013/14*	5	0	0	0	0
2014/15	10	1	2	0	1
2015/16	7	3	0	0	0
2016/17	3	1	0	0	0
2017/18	8	1	1	1	2

* Health & Safety reports are compiled by Financial Years

Outline circumstances of these RIDDOR notifications are provided at the Annex.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear safety events there have been on board vessels at sea in each year since 2006. 194237

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many leaks of radioactive coolant there have been on vessels at sea in each year since 2006. 194238

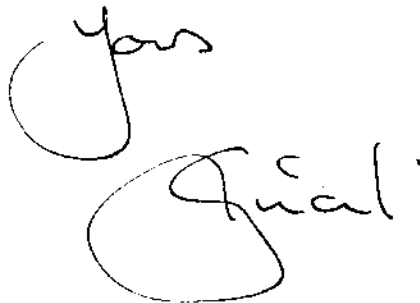
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many fires have taken place on UK (a) nuclear-powered and (b) nuclear-armed submarines in the last five years; and how many of those fires on submarines occurred (a) at sea and (b) while berthed. 194788

Answer

As you will be aware, it is the UK's policy that we do not comment on matters relating to submarine activity or operations. We are, however, prepared to release information regarding the number of fires on Royal Navy submarines, supplementing the answers given to the Members for Argyll and Bute and Moray (Official Record, Reference 384 and 216078) on 3 December 2014 and 4 June 2015 respectively. Since June 2015, there have been 22 fires, which include minor events.

I hope that this response is helpful. Given your interest in our submarines and safety management, perhaps you would like to visit HMNB Clyde in 2019 to see how maintenance activities are conducted. This would allow you to see first-hand the professionalism and strong commitment to safety of the workers across the Base.

A copy of this letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Andrew'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

STUART ANDREW MP

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Written questions and answers

Q Asked by **Deidre Brock** (Edinburgh North and Leith)

Asked on: 21 November 2018

Ministry of Defence

Commons **194233**

Clyde Naval Base: Safety

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear safety events have occurred on vessels other than submarines at Faslane in each year since 2006.

A Answered by: **Stuart Andrew**

Answered on: 29 November 2018

The historical nature and scope of the information requested is such that it will take time to collate. Once this process is completed I will write to the hon. Member.

Grouped Questions: [194234](#) | [194235](#) | [194236](#) | [194237](#) | [194238](#) | [194239](#) | [194783](#) | [194788](#)