

# Last nuclear fuel flask leaves Wylfa

Reaching the end of defuelling is a huge achievement for the twin-reactor site and its staff, who have worked tirelessly to remove the 87,890 fuel elements from the site in Anglesey, North Wales. The elements, which measure 43 inches in length, would stretch for 17-and-a-half miles if placed end to end.

The final shipment marks the end of an era for both the site, meaning that more than 99% of the total radioactivity has now been removed, as well as for Magnox, the company.

## The last shipment arriving at the Sellafield site

Stuart Law, Wylfa Site Director, said:

I am extremely proud of the whole team for working together to reach this important milestone in record time. It has not been an easy task and the work at Wylfa is far from complete, but today is a significant landmark in the site's journey towards care and maintenance.

The defuelling process was hampered by ageing equipment for the first 18 months which brought challenges, but the dedication and problem-solving abilities of the Wylfa team and expertise drawn from across the nuclear industry led to what is, overall, an incredible performance in completing this task.

We have always been grateful of the support given to the site from the local community, and we hope the important part the site plays in the area can continue as we move towards becoming singularly focused on decommissioning and hazard reduction.

Wylfa Site, the biggest and last Magnox site to be built in the UK, operated safely from 1972 until 2015 and generated 232 terawatt hours (TWh) of electricity – enough to power 1.1 million homes per year for 44 years.

This achievement enables Wylfa to move into its decommissioning phase, and allows Magnox and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), who owns the site, to progress the clean-up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy safely, securely and cost-effectively.

Gwen Parry-Jones, Magnox CEO, added:

I have been extremely impressed by the innovation, hard work and commitment of the team to safely reach such an important milestone in the life-cycle of the plant.

As the final Magnox site to defuel, this marks a significant landmark for Magnox as a whole in carrying out our mission to safely decommission our fleet and marks a new focus on the next phase for the whole company.

Staff were joined by representatives from across the NDA Group to see the last flask depart to Valley railhead.

Chris Connelly, Chief Operating Officer, Direct Rail Services, (DRS) commented:

DRS has worked closely with Magnox since 1999 transporting flasks loaded with spent fuel from Magnox sites to Sellafield for reprocessing. Over the years, DRS has safely and securely travelled over three million miles delivering over 9,000 tonnes of spent fuel on behalf of Magnox.

We have developed an excellent working relationship with Magnox and tailored a flexible rail solution to ensure their defuelling demand for transport has been met.

On behalf of the DRS team I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Magnox on the successful end to their defuelling operations and we look forward to supporting them in the future with decommissioning activities.

Wylfa Site will now refocus its highly skilled team on decommissioning activities, including a mix of conventional and radiological projects to further reduce hazards on site.