

Press release: UK meeting milestones for Euratom exit

- new international safeguards agreements signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency
- moves provide certainty to the civil nuclear industry and international partners as the UK prepares for Euratom exit

The [Nuclear Safeguards Bill](#) has become one of the first pieces of legislation addressing the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union to complete its passage through Parliament.

The Bill, which will shortly become an Act, addresses the United Kingdom's departure from the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), an international organisation that governs the peaceful use of nuclear energy within the EU. This essential legislation enables the government to establish a domestic nuclear safeguards regime following departure from Euratom and provides a clear signal to the public, industry and international partners that the UK is on track to meet its obligations from day one of exit.

Nuclear safeguards are important processes through which the UK demonstrates to the international community that civil nuclear material is not diverted into military or weapons programmes.

The UK's commitment to international safeguards and nuclear non-proliferation was reaffirmed in Vienna today, with the signing of 2 new safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

These key agreements with the IAEA – of which the UK is a founding member – are a major milestone in Euratom exit preparations and provide the basis for civil nuclear trading arrangements. This step will be welcomed by the industry in the UK and trading partners around the world.

Minister for Business and Industry, Richard Harrington said:

This major step in our work to prepare for Euratom exit ensures that we will continue in our role as a responsible nuclear state after leaving the EU and Euratom.

These new agreements emphasise our continued commitment to the IAEA and to international safeguards and nuclear non-proliferation, ensuring continuity for our civil nuclear industry from day one of exit.

Suella Braverman, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union, said:

These agreements are a positive step and will help ensure our cooperation with third countries in the field of nuclear energy will continue. This positive progress gives the UK nuclear industry the confidence that there will be no disruption to these arrangements as we leave the EU.

These developments come just weeks after the UK signed a new Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) with the United States of America, which will allow the UK and US to continue their mutually beneficial civil nuclear cooperation when the current Euratom arrangements cease to apply to the UK.

This US-UK NCA is expected to be the first in a series of new international agreements ensuring uninterrupted cooperation and trade following the UK's exit from Euratom.

Notes to Editors

1. The [Nuclear Safeguards Bill](#) will amend the Energy Act 2013 to:
 - a. Provide the Office for Nuclear Regulation with a new safeguards function
 - b. Create new powers for the Secretary of State to put in place regulations setting out the detail of the domestic safeguards regime
2. The Bill will also create a limited power for the Secretary of State to amend 3 existing pieces of legislation to update references to the new IAEA agreements.
3. The UK's Voluntary Offer Agreement and Additional Protocol were signed in Vienna on 7 June.
4. The UK has been a member of the IAEA since its formation in 1957.
5. The signing of new bilateral agreements with the IAEA, a Voluntary Offer Agreement and Additional Protocol, will replace existing trilateral arrangements between the IAEA, Euratom and the UK.
6. The new agreements ensure that the IAEA retains its right to inspect all civil nuclear facilities, and continues to receive current safeguards reporting, thereby ensuring that international verification of our safeguards activity continues to be robust. Such agreements have been put in place on a voluntary basis by the 5 nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
7. The new safeguards regime to be established in the UK will be operated by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). The ONR already regulates

nuclear safety and security in the UK and has been making preparation to replace Euratom as the regulator of safeguards.