

Green light to restart Magnox Reprocessing

News story

The Magnox reprocessing programme on the Sellafield site is set to fully resume this week.



Restarting our Magnox reprocessing operations.

In response to the lockdown in March we safely paused a number of operations on the Sellafield site, including the controlled shutdown of the Magnox Reprocessing Plant.

Since then we've been working closely with government, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), regulators and other stakeholders to understand the impacts on our plans for the completion of Magnox reprocessing.

We recently carried out a temporary 'ramping up' of the plant to finish processing some spent fuel that had remained in the plant while it was shut down.

Having carefully reviewed the situation with the NDA, we are now in a position to fully resume the Magnox reprocessing programme and reprocess the remaining Magnox spent fuel on the Sellafield site.

This remains the safest and most environmentally responsible way of managing this material.

We will keep the situation under constant review and will continue to communicate our progress, but we now expect Magnox reprocessing operations to be completed in 2021.

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CNC achieves silver award in supporting the armed forces community

News story

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) has received a prestigious silver award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).



The award comes only a few short months after the CNC signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved our bronze award in November 2019.

The scheme encourages employers to support defence personnel and inspire others to do the same. Bronze, silver and gold awards are awarded to employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the [Armed Forces Covenant](#).

By achieving our silver award, we have demonstrated that we are an armed forces friendly organisation and employ reservists, armed forces veterans, cadet instructions and military spouses and partners. We have policies and procedures in place to support defence personnel who join us, and also work closely with the British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS) to attend as many of their recruitment events as possible to present the CNC as an employer of choice for those leaving the armed forces.

Chief Constable Simon Chesterman said: "I am proud that the CNC has achieved its silver award so soon after securing bronze. We recognise that armed forces personnel have a wealth of skills and experience to offer. As they are used to carrying out a nationally vital role in keeping the UK safe, they are a good fit for our organisation and our core role of protecting critical national infrastructure.

"We are also in the unique position that allows us to work alongside serving members of HM Forces during any deployment as part of the strategic armed policing reserve and we have forged close relationships with our armed forces

colleagues as a result. We will now begin working towards our gold award as part of the scheme, which we hope to achieve in 2021.”

If you are a serving or ex member of the armed forces and want to find out more about joining us, visit our dedicated page for military personnel on our CNC Jobs website, where you read more information about what we can offer and read case studies of ex forces who have joined us. [Visit our military personnel page](#)

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Let's build back better

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

(English translation: Greeting, greetings, greetings to you all)

Thank you to the British High Commission for organising this event.

My last physical, and absolutely brilliant visit to New Zealand, was in 2016 when I was Minister for Asia and the Pacific in our Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

On this occasion, it is a real pleasure to be joining you virtually.

As countries, peoples and friends we have so many shared interests and values.

One of the most important is our commitment to tackling climate change.

Last year, the UK and New Zealand became two of the first countries in the world to commit to reaching net zero by 2050.

We have worked together to drive climate action across the international community.

As members of the High Ambition Coalition, the Cartagena Dialogue, and the Carbon Neutrality Coalition.

We have shared ambition, expertise and innovation.

And at this critical moment in the fight against climate change, we want to build on this collaboration.

To create fairer, greener and more resilient economies at home and around the world.

Today, governments and businesses are, rightly, focussing on their response to the coronavirus pandemic.

But the climate crisis remains as acute as ever.

You know this all too well, as do we in the UK.

Earlier this year we both suffered severe floods.

New Zealand has also experienced droughts.

And many of our friends across the Pacific face a threat to their very existence.

The science is clear.

To limit warming to 1.5 degrees, we need to halve global emissions over the next decade.

However, current commitments made under the Paris Agreement fall far short of what is required.

That is why, as hosts of COP26, the UK wants to ramp up ambition to achieve a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

We need all countries to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), driving further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030.

And we need all nations to commit to reaching net zero as soon as possible.

The UK will submit its own ambitious NDC, to complement our net zero commitment, well ahead of the summit.

I welcome the fact that New Zealand's NDC is being assessed by the Climate Change Commission in line with the 1.5 degree target.

And we hope the Commission's advice will lead to a more ambitious NDC with strong targets across the whole economy.

In addition to raising ambition, the UK's COP Presidency will focus efforts on 5 areas which need particular attention to achieve our goals.

These are: clean energy, clean transport, nature-based solutions, adaptation and resilience, and underpinning everything, finance.

Here in the UK, we are taking action in each of these areas.

In July – we announced a plan to invest the equivalent of over 5.5 billion New Zealand dollars into improving the energy efficiency of homes and public buildings in 2020/21.

Supporting green jobs, reducing emissions and cutting costs for householders.

When it comes to clean transport, since March we have committed almost NZ\$2

billion in the transition to electric vehicles. With research funding, grants for consumers, and investment in infrastructure.

We are putting over NZ\$1.2 billion towards protecting English habitats through projects such as tree planting, river clean-ups and creating new green spaces for people and wildlife.

And when it comes to adaptation and resilience at home, we have just announced our new long term plan to tackle flooding. We are investing NZ\$10 billion in bolstering our own resilience through flood and coastal defences. Providing better flood protection for 336,000 properties by 2027.

And on finance, last year, the UK committed to doubling its international climate finance contribution to NZ\$22 billion over the period 2021 to 2025.

I know that New Zealand is taking action too, with measures like the environmental jobs package, and your investment in conservation and biodiversity.

I very much want New Zealand and the UK to continue to work closely, to encourage countries around the world to go further.

And to work together across the Pacific.

As a trusted partner of many states, your support in the region will be invaluable.

However, it is not only governments that have a part to play ahead of COP26.

Businesses also have a very important role.

It is fantastic to see that over 100 Chief Executives in New Zealand have already made pledges on reporting and reducing emissions through the Climate Leaders Coalition.

I want to urge all businesses to join the Race to Zero Coalition.

This initiative launched by the High Level Champions for COP25 and COP26 in June is the largest ever alliance of businesses and non-state actors committed to reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest.

We are also working with young people and Indigenous Peoples to shape our response to the climate crisis.

This is particularly important here in New Zealand, where there is much to learn from Māori knowledge and practice about our relationship with the natural world.

Ladies and gentlemen. Whether we live in the South, the North, the East or the West, we share one life-giving but incredibly fragile planet.

So it is imperative that we work together, in the aftermath of the coronavirus, and ahead of COP26, to build back better.

Ka nui te mihi (Te reo Māori, English translation: Thank you very much.)

Government further boosts UK vaccine manufacturing capacity

- Government partners with Wockhardt to provide 'fill and finish' services as part of the effort to accelerate vaccine manufacturing in the UK
- Wockhardt's facility in North Wales could start work on COVID-19 vaccines as early as September 2020
- agreement will help ensure people in the UK can receive a safe and effective vaccine as quickly as possible once one becomes available

The UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities will be further boosted today (Monday 3 August) thanks to a new deal to considerably increase capacity in a crucial part of the manufacturing process for COVID-19 vaccines, advancing efforts to ensure a successful vaccine is widely available to the public.

The government has entered into an 18-month agreement with global pharmaceutical and biotechnology company Wockhardt to carry out the crucial 'fill and finish' stage of the manufacturing process, which involves dispensing the manufactured vaccine substance into vials ready for it to be distributed.

This is an essential part of the vaccines supply chain and as part of this deal, Wockhardt will provide these services for the UK government and producers of vaccines being developed around the world in large quantities.

The fill and finish line is expected to start in September 2020. It will take place at CP Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Wockhardt, based in Wrexham, North Wales, which has the capacity to finish millions of coronavirus vaccine doses.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Ensuring the UK has the capability to research, develop and manufacture a safe and effective vaccine is critical in our fight against coronavirus.

Today we have secured additional capacity to manufacture millions of doses of multiple COVID-19 candidates, guaranteeing the supply of vaccines we need to protect people across the UK rapidly and in large numbers.

Kate Bingham, Chair of the Vaccines Taskforce said:

Never before have we needed to find and manufacture a vaccine at this speed and scale in order to protect the UK population.

We have made significant progress in securing a diverse portfolio of potential vaccines and treatments for COVID-19, adding a fourth vaccine candidate from GSK and Sanofi earlier this week. However, discovering a successful vaccine is only part of the solution, we also need to be able to manufacture it.

Fill and finish is a critical step in the process to get the vaccine in a form to be given to patients. The agreement with Wockhardt will boost our capability to ensure that from the moment a successful vaccine is identified we will be able to produce the quantities of vaccine required, as quickly as possible, for the people who need it.

Founder Chairman of Wockhardt Dr Habil Khorakiwala said:

The pandemic of COVID-19 is a challenge for all and needs a concerted effort to overcome. We are proud to be collaborating with the UK government to make vaccines available and the arrangement brings in a huge sense of purpose and pride, it upholds our ongoing commitment to fight against such a pandemic of global human importance. As a global organisation, we are focused and committed to assist in mitigating the worldwide impact of COVID-19.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

This agreement demonstrates the importance of Welsh manufacturers in the UK's fight against coronavirus, highlighting once again the strengths of working together across the UK to combat the pandemic.

Securing this manufacturing capacity means that safe and effective vaccines, produced in Wales, will potentially be distributed rapidly to people across the UK.

The agreement with Wockhardt complements the new Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre, which is currently under construction in Oxfordshire as a result of £93 million government investment. The UK's vaccine manufacturing efforts are further supported by an additional £100 million for a state-of-the-art Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult Manufacturing Innovation Centre in Braintree, Essex, to accelerate the mass production of a successful COVID-19 vaccine in the UK.

While the Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre is under construction, the government has invested an additional £38 million to establish a rapid deployment facility opening later this summer.

Wockhardt is a global pharmaceutical and biotech organisation that brings affordable, high quality medicines to market. In the UK, Wockhardt is one of the largest suppliers into the NHS for over 20 years, has had a presence in Wrexham for over 2 decades and employs over 400 people at its 612,000 square feet high-tech manufacturing facility.

The news follows the government securing early access to millions of vaccine doses from AstraZeneca for the University of Oxford vaccine, BioNTech/Pfizer alliance, Valneva and GSK/Sanofi as part of its strategy to build a strong portfolio of promising new vaccines to protect the UK from COVID-19.

[Report 06/2020: Signal passed at stop and near miss, Deansgate-Castlefield tram stop, Manchester](#)

Summary

At around 17:19 hrs on 17 May 2019, a tram passed through the centre platform of Deansgate-Castlefield tram stop on the Manchester Metrolink system, without making its scheduled stop. The tram exited the platform at around 9 mph (14 km/h) and then passed a stop signal. This placed it in the path of a second tram, which was approaching a junction as part of a signalled movement. The driver of the second tram saw the first tram approaching and was able to stop in time to avoid a collision.

The incident occurred because the driver of the first tram did not stop at the platform or stop signal, due to a temporary loss of awareness. While some doubt remains as to the reason for this loss of awareness, RAIB considers that it was either the result of a medical event or the driver losing focus on the driving task. RAIB found that the driver had been involved in previous similar incidents but that the tramway operator, Keolis Amey Metrolink, had not adequately addressed his safety performance. RAIB also found that the driver's safety device on the tram did not detect or mitigate the driver's loss of awareness because it was not designed to do so.

The hazard of a driver losing awareness while operating a tram was not recognised by Thales when it risk assessed the new layout at the tram stop or by Transport for Greater Manchester when it approved the new layout for service. Keolis Amey Metrolink also did not recognise this hazard during its risk assessment of the new layout, although it did identify the hazard as part of a general risk assessment of tram driving tasks. Despite this, the associated risks were not effectively controlled.

Recommendations

RAIB has made three recommendations, all addressed to Keolis Amey Metrolink. The first recommendation concerns a review and updating of its strategy for managing the risk of trams passing signals at danger or stop. The other recommendations relate to factors that were not causal to the incident, but which address safety issues identified during the investigation. These are concerned with Keolis Amey Metrolink ensuring medical fitness requirements for drivers are based on an understanding of the risks of their activities, and that its fatigue risk management system meets with relevant industry guidance and best practice.

RAIB has also referred to two previous recommendations made in its report into the overturning of a tram at Sandilands junction, Croydon, on 9 November 2016. One of these previous recommendations was that UK tram operators, owners and infrastructure managers should jointly conduct a systematic review of operational risks and control measures associated with the design, maintenance and operation of tramways. The second was that UK tram operators, owners and infrastructure managers should work together to research and evaluate systems capable of reliably detecting driver attention state and initiating appropriate automatic responses if a low level of alertness is identified.

Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:

This alarming incident reinforces the need for the tramway industry to continue to pursue implementation of the important recommendations that RAIB made in the report on the Sandilands junction disaster of 2016. Trams are driven in accordance with the 'line of sight' principle, and safe operation is heavily reliant on drivers remaining focused on the driving task at all times. It is important that drivers' fitness and performance are carefully managed, and systems are in place to detect that a driver has lost awareness. It is therefore encouraging to learn that there is a lot being done in the tramway industry at present to develop, test and evaluate improved systems for the detection of drivers' loss of awareness.

In our investigation into this incident it was disappointing to find that management processes and action plans, intended to address previous safety incidents in which the tram driver had been involved, had not been carried out or were not fully implemented. The integrity of any safety management system relies on conscientious and intelligent application of the procedures that form part of it. If managers don't do this, the safety of the tramway is at risk.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents

and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.

2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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