

Views sought on Sizewell C nuclear power station permits

The Environment Agency is seeking feedback from the community and national stakeholders on applications for three environmental permits required for operation of the proposed Sizewell C nuclear power station.

EDF SZC Co is looking to build a new nuclear power station next to Sizewell B in Suffolk.

As well as regulating the proposed site, through these environmental permits, the Environment Agency also provides advice and information to the Planning Inspectorate on a whole manner of subjects, including the protection of water quality and ecology; and flood and coastal risk management.

These three permits were submitted to the Environment Agency last month. They cover the controls that EDF SZC Co need to put into place to ensure high standards of environmental protection during commissioning, operation and decommissioning.

The three main operational permits sought are for: disposals and discharges of radioactive wastes; operation of standby power supply systems using diesel generators; and discharges of cooling water and liquid effluent into the North Sea.

Consultations on the three permit applications are running at the same time in order to give people a clear opportunity to find out about all the relevant information through one process.

The consultation on the application will run from 6 July 2020 for 12 weeks.

The Environment Agency must decide whether to grant or refuse the issue of the permits. If it grants a permit, the Environment Agency can include conditions to ensure proper protection of people and the environment.

The Environment Agency's Nuclear New Build Project Manager, Simon Barlow, said:

These applications represent the culmination of 10 years of pre-application discussions with EDF SZC Co. We welcome people's views on these permit applications and will carefully consider their comments before we progress to the next stage of our decision making process.

As these applications relate to the disposal and discharge of radioactive waste; operation of standby power supply systems using diesel generators; and discharges of cooling water and liquid effluent into the North Sea they will all have implications for the environment and should be rigorously examined – hence our

consultation.

After we have reviewed the applications, our next stage will be to conduct a further consultation on our draft decisions, when members of the public will have another opportunity to provide us with their comments.

We appreciate that there are currently limitations on people's movements and accessibility challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic, so we will be taking measures to ensure everyone can have access to the relevant documents and direct contact with Environment Agency officers, to ask questions and discuss their concerns.

The [environmental permit applications for Sizewell C can be found here](#).

If you would like to receive Environment Agency e-bulletins about our work in response to the Sizewell C project, please contact: SizewellCNNB@environment-agency.gov.uk

Further information

During and after the 12 weeks, Environment Agency experts will be carrying out technical assessments of the applications and will consider comments.

Later, when we have reached a draft decision on the permits, a further 12 week period of consultation will be held to share our views and seek further feedback before making any final decisions.

At that stage we'll run a series of drop-in events (Coronavirus restrictions permitting) so that people can ask questions of our staff.

The Environment Agency is the independent environmental regulator for the nuclear industry in England. It makes sure that nuclear power stations meet its high standards of environmental protection. It regulates the Sizewell sites working closely with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

The Environment Agency and the Office for Nuclear Regulation have already completed their assessment of the UK EPR reactor design that EDF SZC Co is proposing for its Sizewell C site. The assessment process ended in December 2012 and the Environment Agency and ONR concluded that the reactor design is 'acceptable'. This means that people and the environment will be properly protected if this reactor design is constructed and operated in the UK.

Further information about [our role in nuclear new build can be found here](#).

Civil news: updated contract schedules from 1 September 2020

News story

New civil contract schedules beginning 1 September 2020 to be made available by the end of August.



We will soon be issuing new civil contract schedules beginning on 1 September 2020.

These will replace the current second year schedules for the 2018 Standard Civil Contract which are ending on 31 August 2020. All schedules will run for 12 months.

Where to find new schedules

You will be able to view schedules, including Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) schedules, in Contracted Work and Administration (CWA) from no later than 31 August 2020.

Reporting work

Work completed in September can be reported from 1 October 2020. Matter start allocations

In most cases, matter starts will be allocated on the basis of the allocation bid for in the original tender.

Where you have self-granted an additional 50% of matter starts, you will receive this increased allocation.

This includes an allocation of additional 20 miscellaneous matter starts to advise victims of human trafficking/modern slavery on compensation claims where a provider bid for these in the original tender.

Providers will be able self-grant a further 50% of matter starts in the third year of the contract.

Removal of mandatory gateway

In May we increased the fixed allocation of debt matter starts from 4 to 10 in response to the removal of the mandatory gateway. We have retained this additional allocation for the new schedule.

Further information

[LAA Online Portal](#) – to log into Contracted Work and Administration

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Funding for Somerset communities

The money has been granted to the Somerset Coronavirus Appeal to help support the community during the coronavirus pandemic.

The funds will be administered by the Somerset Community Foundation (SCF), and ring-fenced for people living in the Sedgemoor district of the county, and will be used to support projects such as foodbanks; activity and play-packs for disadvantaged children and young people, and to support the health and well-being needs of vulnerable people most affected by the crisis across the region.

The funding forms part of the 12 grants, worth £300,000 in total, Magnox has made available to local authorities or charities where a Magnox site is located.

Gwen Parry-Jones, Magnox Chief Executive, said:

Many community groups are carrying out positive work, supporting the most vulnerable in their areas. This work is vital, and a key part of Magnox's response to COVID-19 is to help other organisations deal with the pandemic wherever we can.

In this time of national crisis, Magnox has agreed with the NDA that we should make available up to £25,000 at each site from the Magnox Socio-economic Scheme for use by local community groups on COVID-19 related activities. Magnox is committed to assisting the communities surrounding our sites, as our communities have supported us for over 50 years, and we hope this funding will go some way to supporting the essential work being delivered.

Teresa Harvey, Assistant Director for Housing, Health and Wellbeing at Sedgemoor Council, said: "This is a fantastic gesture from Magnox and we are

very grateful indeed. The funding will help support some of the amazing work that has been going on over the past three months in our communities and will help provide fun things for children (and adults) to do over the summer.

Justin Sargent, CEO at SCF, added: “We would like to thank Magnox for their support. Their contribution to our Somerset Coronavirus Appeal will be swiftly awarded to local groups and organisations, helping them to continue their good work on the front line, supporting those most in need in our communities.”

SCF recently launched the next phase of their Somerset Coronavirus Appeal in a bid to raise £1.5m for communities across the Somerset.

Justin continued: “In the three months since our appeal was first launched, thanks to the incredible support of local donors like Magnox and the National Emergencies Trust, it has raised more than £800,000 for Somerset. Those donations have meant that so far, grants worth £450,000 have been awarded to over 160 charitable groups across the county, with more being awarded every week.

“We believe that if we can reach our target and award £1.5m in grants we can help our local charities and community groups to weather the financial storm they’re facing now and in the future. The impact of coronavirus on our communities won’t end when lockdown is lifted. Life will be even tougher for those who are already disadvantaged.

“Small, local charities are vital to Somerset’s social fabric and funding from organisations like Magnox will help tackle this disadvantage and keep our communities strong.”

[Smarter Manufacturing – Digital Supply Chain: apply for funding](#)

News story

Technology and manufacturing businesses can now apply for funding to develop innovative digital technologies that have the potential to transform supply chains.



Technology and manufacturing businesses can now apply for funding to develop innovative digital technologies that have the potential to transform supply chains; ensuring a more efficient, productive, flexible and resilient UK manufacturing sector.

Through funding from the UK government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, led by Innovate UK, business-led consortia can apply for funding for projects up to £1.5m.

Projects will support the development of innovative digital technologies and work with manufacturers to rethink and restructure the way they design and operate supply chains.

Businesses applying for the new funding can look to improve results from existing supply chains, redesign or re-engineer supply chains or design completely new supply chain concepts for new products or processes.

By adopting new digital technologies within supply chains, it can result in a more efficient supply chain, enabling business to expand into new markets and boost productivity in an effort to recover from COVID-19.

These two competitions form part of the wider Made Smarter activities. Made Smarter is a national movement to drive growth amongst UK makers and advance the UK economy. Backed by world-renowned businesses and the UK government, it will improve the development and adoption of emerging technologies.

Digital Supply Chain competition details

Projects must use digital technologies to optimise the design and execution of supply chain activities.

Solutions can aim to improve and optimise existing supply chains, redesign or re-engineer existing supply chains or design new supply chains for new products or processes.

Projects can cover supply chain design or execution

Supply chain design

- effective risk management
- inventory optimisation

- sustainable supply chains for increased flexibility
- warehouse & logistics optimisation
- confidence in shared data
- new business models that affect the configuration of the supply chain

Supply chain execution

- demand management, sensing and shaping
- proactive use of use of demand data
- delivery performance
- improved decision-making through analytics
- production planning or scenario modelling
- track-and-trace technologies

The competition is separated into two principal strands: feasibility studies and industrial research.

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1. 8 July 2020

updated text in introductory paragraph

2. 6 July 2020

First published.

[Preparedness and response to COVID-19: scientific educational webinar in Ashgabat](#)

On 2 July, as part of the UK Government's broader COVID-19 global response to help the authorities respond effectively to the pandemic and its negative impacts, British Embassy Ashgabat organised a scientific webinar on the prevention, preparedness and response to COVID-19 in Turkmenistan. The event was held at the International Scientific-Educational Centre of the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry.

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At this virtual roundtable event, a group of senior scientists and professors

from the internationally renowned British universities, institutes and government agencies such as Public Health England (PHE), an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), John Innes Centre, University of Cambridge, University of Birmingham, University of Manchester, University College London Hospitals (UCLH), Imperial College London and Royal College of Pathologists (RCPath) shared their ongoing efforts in the area of COVID-19 prevention and scientific research with the Turkmen medical workers, healthcare specialists and representatives of the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry.

The speakers shared their expertise in dealing with some of the major challenges that the COVID-19 crisis has created across the world and the UK. The British scientists underlined the importance of basics such as hand hygiene, wearing masks in enclosed areas and public health measures to reduce risk. They also stressed that the COVID-19 tests had to be widely available and affordable to public.

During the webinar, presenters also talked about the basics of coronaviruses, their genetic history (when and where the virus outbreak started), their population genetic parameters and touched upon tracing sources of infection – what are they, what diseases do they cause and where do they come from. The discussion continued with talk about setting up diagnostics facilities for COVID-19, the applied methods and techniques for protecting medical workers and immune response to the virus. Finally, the speakers presented on a discussion of the strategic and operational challenges they have faced during this pandemic and described Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing for coronavirus detection.

Representatives from the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry asked their British colleagues about the proceedings and outcomes of the most recent research in combating the pandemic and how they had managed the surge in COVID-19 cases in the UK. They expressed appreciation for the information presented and praised the collective efforts and thoughts on best practice, adding that their staff found presentations very informative, interesting and educative.

Topic of COVID-19 is very new not just to Turkmenistan, but also to the whole world. Thus, the both sides agreed that this webinar was not meant to be a single event, but a starting point for the deepened coordination between the two countries to tackle the challenges of the pandemic by bringing us closer to resolving this important issue.