

Press release: Chemical event at Sellafield, 21 October 2017

Following a chemical inventory audit in a laboratory, we took the decision to dispose of a number of chemicals which are no longer used in our operations and have been stored since 1992.

In line with best practice and established procedures, we alerted the relevant partner agencies and sought advice on managing this material in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations.

Update at 10:40 Saturday 21 October

- This is not a radiological event
- The chemicals are contained within a small number of canisters. These need to be removed and disposed of appropriately.
- The materials involved are solvents which are widely used in industry.
- They will be disposed of in a controlled manner.
- An area of the site is cordoned off as a precaution – but the rest of the site is operational and the majority of our staff who would be in at the weekend are at work and working normally.
- The army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team deal with hundreds of these issues every year, recovering chemicals from science laboratories in places like schools and universities.
- These chemicals are used extensively in many industries and are well understood.
- Because this is happening on the Sellafield site we exercise extreme caution and leave nothing to chance.

Background

As is usual in these scenarios, a specialised unit was invited to attend the Sellafield site to assess the material and advise on its safe disposal.

That team, from the army's Explosives Ordnance Disposal Team, will dispose

of the material safely.

They will dig a trench, bury the canisters using sandbags, and detonate them in a controlled manner. This will create a noise that will be audible off-site, but there is no need for alarm.

The chemicals involved are solvents, such as Tetrahydrofuran, which are potentially flammable in liquid states and can crystallise and become unstable when exposed to air (oxygen) Crystallisation takes a number of days.

[News story: Business Secretary points to bright future for Belfast during Canada visit](#)

Business Secretary Greg Clark was in Canada today (20 October 2017) to attend an event marking the joint venture between Airbus and Bombardier, agreed earlier this week.

During the visit, Greg Clark held meetings with Bombardier and Airbus' senior leadership, including Airbus' CEO Tom Enders and COO Fabrice Brégier; and Bombardier's Chairman Pierre Beaudoin, President and CEO Alain Bellemare and President, Aerostructures and Engineering Services in Belfast, Michael Ryan.

Greg Clark also met Canadian Minister of International Trade François-Philippe Champlain, with both governments reinforcing their joint commitment to working with the companies to build on the C-Series success, while continuing to ensure the unjustified case brought by Boeing is brought to a swift resolution.

The Business secretary also met with members of the Quebec Government, Premier Philippe Couillard, Deputy Premier Dominique Anglade and Minister of International Affairs Christine Saint-Pierre.

The event, held at Bombardier's assembly facility in Mirabel, Quebec, marks an important step in the future of Bombardier's C-Series aircraft and in securing the Bombardier Shorts plant in Belfast, which produces the aircraft's wings.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Airbus' announcement that it is taking a stake in Bombardier's C-Series was an important positive step forward for the C-Series and the highly skilled and dedicated workforce in Belfast.

I discussed with Airbus and Bombardier how the new partnership has

the potential to see Bombardier Shorts plant in Belfast build on its excellence and grow further. In my meeting with Canadian Minister of International Trade François-Philippe Champlain we reinforced our commitment to continuing to work together to ensure the unjustified case brought by Boeing is brought to a swift resolution.

News story: Flood risk this weekend

This is likely to cause large waves and spray which could lead to coastal flooding along the south and south-west coast.

Ben Lukey , National Flood Duty Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

Environment Agency teams are on the ground, checking defences and taking precautionary action to close tidal gates and put up temporary barriers. We're working with the Met Office and local authorities and are ready to respond as necessary.

We urge people to stay safe along the coast and warn against putting yourself in unnecessary danger by taking 'storm selfies' or driving through flood water – just 30cm is enough to move your car.

You can check whether you're affected at www.gov.uk/flood. We will issue flood alerts and warnings as needed, so please sign up to receive them for free online or by calling 0345 988 1188.

News story: New frigates opportunity for Ferguson as Defence Secretary visits

The Defence Secretary launched an ambitious National Shipbuilding Strategy last month, in which he laid out plans for a first batch of five of another new class of frigates – the Type 31e. Industry has been invited to provide high level plans to build an initial order of five ships at a maximum average price of £250 million per ship.

The Defence Secretary has personally committed to visiting all of the UK's major shipyards in the run-up to industry bringing forward its solutions for the Type 31e class, as he looks to grow the Royal Navy fleet for the first time since World War Two.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

With our cutting-edge Type 26 frigates already being built on the Clyde, I know Scottish skilled engineers will relish the chance to compete to build a brand new class of warships for the growing Royal Navy. We want to make the most of the renaissance in UK shipbuilding, delivering the latest ships that will help protect our nation and our interests across the world.

Part of the MOD's £178bn equipment plan, the contract for the first three Type 26 frigates has already been signed. Safeguarding 4,000 jobs in Scotland and across the UK supply chain until 2035, they are being built at BAE System's Govan shipyard on the Clyde.

The Defence Secretary cut steel on HMS Glasgow, the first Type 26, in July. Along with her sister ships she will have a truly global reach, protecting the UK's strategic interests, alongside the UK's nuclear submarines, and delivering high-end warfighting capability wherever it is needed. In a further commitment to Scottish shipbuilding, five Offshore Patrol Vessels are being built at BAE Systems' Scotstoun shipyard in Glasgow, sustaining around 800 jobs. Ahead of his trip to Ferguson, the Defence Secretary also visited the Scotstoun site where his wife, Lady Wendy Fallon, formally named the second OPV.

With the Government committing to build the Type 31e warships in the UK, Ferguson has the opportunity to compete for this latest programme to build ships for the Royal Navy. One option is to build the Type 31e frigates in blocks around the country, assembled at a central hub. This reflects how the biggest ship ever built for the Royal Navy, the 65,000-tonne HMS Queen Elizabeth, was constructed.

The Type 31e Frigates will not only be designed to meet the needs of the Royal Navy, but also the export market. The Government will work together with industry to provide the certainty and support needed to become internationally competitive. Such a move will boost the British economy and jobs, while also helping to create a more stable and well-protected world.

The Defence Secretary has already paid visits to Cammell Laird in Merseyside and Harland and Wolff in Belfast as he continues to reach out to shipyards across the UK. Earlier this week BAE Systems and Cammell Laird outlined their proposal for the Type 31e.

Press release: Change of British High Commissioner to Namibia

2015 – present FC0, Head, Whitehall Nigeria Unit 2015 FC0, Deputy Head, Ebola Task Force 2014 – 2015 FC0, Deputy Head, UK Ebola Response 2014 Freetown, Deputy High Commissioner 2010 – 2014 Rome, British Embassy, Prosperity Team Leader 2007 – 2010 Abuja, British High Commission, Head, Political Section 2005 – 2007 FC0, Africa Energy Adviser, Climate Change and Energy Group 2004 – 2005 Shell International Oil Products Ltd, Global Oil Products Marketing Manager 2002 – 2004 Shell International, Team Leader, Internal Management Consultancy 2000 – 2001 Shell UK Ltd, Marketing Manager 1999 – 2000 Oxfam, Press Officer