



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy



Ministry
of Defence



Revised requirements for radiological protection: emergency preparedness and response

Government response

October 2018

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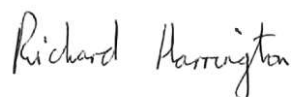
Ministerial Foreword



1. The UK has benefited from more than 60 years of clean and safe nuclear-generated electricity. The Government is committed to the safe and successful future of our nuclear and radiological sectors which provide a valuable contribution to our economy and our society.
2. All of our civil nuclear, defence nuclear, and radiological sites are operated to the highest safety standards, and there are stringent safety standards for the transport of radioactive material. All are independently regulated to ensure they are safe, secure and environmentally sound.
3. The risk of a radiation emergency is therefore extremely low, but there must be robust emergency preparedness and response arrangements in place for radiological emergencies, however unlikely they may be. The UK has well developed emergency response arrangements but we are committed to continuous improvement in our preparedness, drawing on international best practice.
4. I am therefore pleased to present the Government's response, in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive and Ministry of Defence, to our consultation on proposals to further strengthen Great Britain's already robust emergency preparedness and response arrangements for radiological emergencies. These changes will implement the emergency preparedness and response elements of the Euratom Basic Safety Standards Directive 2013 which applies learning following the Fukushima Daiichi accident. Even though the UK will be leaving the EU and the Euratom Treaty, the Government remains wholly committed to the highest standards in radiological safety – including emergency preparedness and response.
5. Since our consultation we have carefully considered the responses, conducted analysis to further develop our policy proposals and drafted Regulations. The draft regulations that give effect to our policy conclusions are published alongside this document. I intend to lay them in parliament in late 2018 and early 2019.
6. These changes will introduce a consistent approach to emergency planning and response across the civil nuclear, defence nuclear and radiological sectors. They are an outcome focused approach to regulation, based on evidence, and subject to enhanced transparency. They enhance our already robust emergency planning and response regime and introduce the new concepts of emergency worker and reference levels. They revise other existing definitions for increased clarity. We are improving planning on the ground through the introduction of new outline planning zones where this is appropriate and proportionate – in the language of the Directive, "commensurate". We are improving communication requirements, and widening access to stable iodine as a key medical protective action.
7. These changes will help local authorities to better understand the risks and deliver commensurate planning, and help to ensure we are prepared in the

extremely unlikely event of a larger scale radiation emergency. Where possible, we are also looking to reduce and clarify the regulatory burden for duty holders.

8. We will continue to require the testing and exercising of emergency plans, but to strengthen our arrangements still further there will be an explicit requirement to take account of lessons learned as well as any substantive changes that could affect an emergency plan.
9. The Government also intend to develop a national plan for radiation emergencies that could extend beyond formal emergency planning zones, for radiological transport emergencies and for international events which could impact on the UK. This will ensure we remain at the forefront of responsible nuclear energy states, and reflects the importance the UK places on nuclear safety and our commitment to continuous improvement.
10. Our changes to the existing regulations are significant and we recognise that time is needed to comply with legal obligations, especially given that it is a criminal offence to fail to do so. We have worked with stakeholders to develop a fair and appropriate implementation timeframe, and have included a 12 month transitional period in the new regulations to give existing duty holders sufficient time to meet their revised regulatory obligations. There will be additional flexibility for the exercising of plans which have long lead times. Until that time, the current regulations will apply in full to existing duty holders.
11. We are grateful to all those who responded to the consultation and to the many organisations involved for their ongoing support in achieving this outcome, and for their contribution to the work of delivering the highest standards of emergency preparedness and response.



The Rt Hon Richard Harrington MP

Minister for Energy and Industry

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy