

Southampton City Council

PORTFOLIO /

CABINET Southampton City Council - Corporate

MEMBER:

DATE: July 2011

SUBJECT: Incident Review – SotonSafe Plan

AUTHOR(S): Graham Wyeth - Emergency Planning and Business
Continuity Manager

DIRECTORATE: Environment

**POLICY CO-
ORDINATOR:** By delegated authority - Linda Haitana through Sarita
Riley(Legal)

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This matter is presented for information / update purposes only.

1. BACKGROUND:

Southampton City Council (SCC) assumes a statutory duty under the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations 2001 (REPPPIR) for the SotonSafe Port of Southampton Off-site Reactor Emergency Plan. The Plan ensures an integrated and collaborative multi agency response in the highly unlikely event of a nuclear emergency arising during a visit to the Port of Southampton by a nuclear powered submarine that may impact upon naval personnel, Port operatives or general public safety. This duty is discharged by the interagency SotonSafe Emergency Planning Group (SEPG) and due process of the City Council.

The Royal Navy (RN) notified its intension for the nuclear powered submarine HMS Astute to visit the port between Wednesday 6th and Sunday 10th April 2011 in advance, allowing the appropriate prerequisites of such a visit to be fully assessed and implemented. Such assessment is based upon events that are reasonably foreseeable.

The vessel was dully received onto her designated Berth 38 Eastern Docks as scheduled.

As a result of a well publicised incident on board HMS Astute whilst berthed in the Port on Friday 8th April 2011, a duty falls to SCC under REPPPIR to review the SotonSafe Plan for any changes that may be required as a result of the incident and its potential implications for a radiation emergency. It is important to emphasise that in doing so this process does not touch upon or potentially compromise the Police led criminal investigation, RN internal investigation or subsequent Coroners Inquest surrounding the incident.

At its meeting on 10th May the SEPG noted the requirement and a subgroup was established to examine and report upon any such implications. The group comprised the following officers, all of whom had been actively engaged within pre, during and post visit requirements of HMS Astute:

Graham Wyeth - SCC Emergency Planning Manager
Captain Ray Blair – Deputy Harbour Master
Police Superintendent Steven France-Sargeant
Iain Bowker – Royal Navy PM Nuclear

The group met on Friday 24th July 2011 to consider the matter and report accordingly.

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2. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES:

It is recognised that at no stage during the incident of the 8th April was the nuclear plant of HMS Astute at risk or the need to activate the SotonSafe Plan required.

While a firearms discharge on the submarine was not a reasonably foreseeable event beforehand the need now arises to review the technical and safety appraisals that inform both the operators and off-site plans with a view to whether or not such an incident, if it were to occur in any critical areas of the vessel could result in a release of radiation and risk to personnel and public safety. The operator by virtue of its related SotNusafe Plan will discharge its duty under separate cover

In relation to its off-site responsibility the group considered errant behaviour of intruders, visitors and crew and is fully satisfied the RN procedures and control measures in place are more than sufficient to ensure the integrity and safety of the vessel and on board nuclear plant. Indeed, given that status of the vessel as a warship and its protective measures it would take an infringement of monumental proportions or a significant chain of uninterrupted events to create the risk to which SotonSafe applies.

It is considered inappropriate and unnecessary to further consider in the context of this report the nature and details of those measures.

3. CONCLUSION:

The sub group considers that no issues arise as a result of the incident on board HMS Astute on the date in question that require change or amendment to the SotonSafe Plan.

In doing so the agreement of the Solicitor and lead officer of the City Council and the Superintendent of the Office for Nuclear Regulation is sought that Southampton City Council through its SEPG has discharged its duty under Regulation 4 (1C) and 10 (1) of REPIR or advise of any further assessment or action that should be undertaken.