

**MINUTES OF THE 5TH MEETING OF THE
RAMSDEN DOCK TERMINAL STAKEHOLDER GROUP
HELD ON MONDAY 10 MAY 2010, INS MARINE TERMINAL BARROW**

Present

Councillor D Pidduck, Chairman RDTSG
Mr P Huck, Barrow Borough Council
Councillor E Wood, Barrow Borough Council
Mr C Briggs, Cumbria County Council
Mr J Goddard, James Fisher Shipping Services
Mr D Carpenter, Associated British Ports
Mrs E Foran, Direct Rail Services
Mr A A Brown, Mrs D Redman, Mr R Wilcox-Baker, INS
Mrs L O'Leary, Secretary RDTSG

1) Opening Remarks

The chairman welcomed members to the 5th Ramsden Dock Terminal Stakeholder Group meeting and his first as Chair.

The chairman then called upon, Mr Bernard Payne, Marine Terminal Manager to give a brief overview of the Site Safety Rules.

2) Retired Members/New Members and Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mr David Humphreys, Emergency Planning CCC, who was represented by Mr Chris Briggs; Mr Paul Jervis, ABP, who was represented by Mr David Carpenter; Chief Inspector Malcolm Woodhouse, Deputy Locality Manger Roger Exley and Councillor Rory McClure, also passed on their apologies.

ACTION No.1 – Secretary to contact Cumbria County Council. *Status ongoing due to no response being received from various letters sent to Cumbria County Council (CCC). Mr Chris Briggs, Emergency Planning Section of CCC offered to take forward and obtain a representatives name.*

3) Minutes from previous meeting

The Chairman requested comments from Committee members with regards to inaccuracies within the minutes.

The chairman confirmed that the minutes from the 4th meeting were accepted and approved. With two matters arising, one associated with CCC representative and the second was to be covered with the EHS&Q review under agenda item 5.

4) Operations Review

Mr Alastair Brown, updated Committee members, with regards to the Operations Review.

4.1 General

Since the last meeting, the PNTL/NDA fleet of ships has continued to operate in a safe and efficient manner.

It's pleasing to see that for the first time in several years, all PNTL ships are currently trading and the Ramsden Dock terminal is empty.

4.2 European Shearwater

The NDA owned European Shearwater has now been decommissioned and recycled in The Netherlands. This was carried out at the same shipyard as previously used for PNTL vessels and a total of 95% of the vessel was recycled.

4.3 Pacific Sandpiper

The Pacific Sandpiper is currently in Kobe in Japan having successfully delivered the first UK High Level Waste (HLW) shipment. This follows on from a total of 12 shipments from France.

A further presentation was given at the end of the Operational Review, which gave more detail in relation to the Japanese shipment. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

4.4 Pacific Heron/Pacific Pintail

Since the last meeting, the Pacific Heron, has returned to Barrow from Japan. It had been anticipated that she would return empty flasks, from the last MOX shipment, from the Chubu Nuclear Power Plant to Cherbourg, however following a series of delays caused by an earthquake and then a typhoon which damaged the road to the port, the vessel returned without any cargo.

Since then, the Pacific Heron, together with the Pacific Pintail has commenced a further shipment of MOX fuel from France to Japan. The shipment is due to arrive in Japan in late June.

4.5 Atlantic Osprey

Atlantic Osprey, currently in the Port of Workington, has undertaken one shipment to Sweden with materials for post irradiation examination in November 2009. She has also recently undertaken a shipment of HLW from Sellafield to Holland in March of this year.

Once, again further detail is provided within the presentation given at the end of the Operational Review.

4.6 New PNTL vessels

The Committee has previously been advised of the replacement of a further two PNTL vessels. Pacific Egret was launched in Tamano, Japan on 11th January and Pacific Grebe was launched on 12th April. The vessels are due to be handed over to PNTL in early summer and autumn respectively. On their arrival in Barrow, there will be some final outfitting, particularly on Pacific Egret, where a number of items will be transferred from Pacific Pintail.

4.7 Emergency Response

The section has continued its programme of emergency response exercises and training, including practical training for the emergency response teams from Sellafield.

4.8 Vitrified Residue Returns to Japan and Holland

Mr Alastair Brown put into context, the reasons behind the transport was to satisfy contract obligation going back to the 1960's when Spent Fuel from Japan and Europe started being delivered to the UK and France. During the reprocessing process waste is vitrified in order to ship back to customers, to date we have completed 12 shipments from France to Japan, with an on-going programme from the UK of one shipment a year for the next 8 to 10 years. With a similar programme anticipated for European customers.

Slide 1 – Details in relation to the first Japanese shipment, this particular shipment took the shortest route to Japan of the three available routes, via the Panama Canal.

Slide 2 – Shows the very robust flask weighing approximately 113 tonnes and containing 28 canisters. Picture showed a number of local and national media representatives viewing the arrival.

Slide 3 – Shows the flask being lifted off one of the new rail wagon specifically designed to take this new type of flask due to the increase in weight compared to that of a Spent Fuel flask, which took it over the weight limit of the old rail wagons.

Slide 4 – Shows the flask being lifted into the hold of Pacific Sandpiper.

Slide 5 – Covered the second shipment from Sellafield, but the first shipment to Europe from Sellafield.

Mr Alastair Brown went on to explain, why there was a short delay between the arrival of the flask from Sellafield to the departure of the Atlantic Osprey from Barrow. The previous few days in Japan had seen the arrival of the first flask from Sellafield, with unloading commencing. The Japanese confirmed that the expected 28

canisters had been unloaded; however, they had not been in the configuration anticipated, from documentation received from Sellafield Ltd. Various analysis had taken place, which from a safety point of view had not jeopardised the shipment. However, it was decided that the prudent view was to delay the shipment whilst checks were carried out.

Mr Alastair Brown then went on to explain, why the voyage from Barrow to Vlissingen had actually taken longer than might have been expected. A fixed time and date for delivery of the flask to Vlissingen had been agreed with the Dutch authorities and in order to ensure the vessel kept to the schedule, we are required to include an amount of contingency to allow for bad weather and so on. This voyage had encountered only mild weather and therefore, in order to achieve this agreed time it was also necessary for the vessel to slow steam for a short while, out of the main shipping lanes.

Slide 6 – Shows the European flask arriving at the Terminal. Mrs Eva Foran, DRS, requested a copy of the picture used within the slide.

Action/Matters arising 5.1 – Mr Alastair Brown to forward a copy of the picture to Mrs Eva Foran.

Slide 7 – Shows the flask being lifting from the rail wagon into the Atlantic Osprey.

Slide 8 – Shows the flask being unloaded at Vlissingen using one of the largest mobile cranes in Europe, specifically hired in for the day, to remove the flask from the vessel on to the road vehicle.

Slide 9 – Shows the flask being loaded onto the road vehicle for the relatively short journey from the Port to the Site. Mr Alastair Brown pointed out that the three ventilation shaft's in the distance, was the Dutch HLW storage facility.

Mr Phil Huck, Barrow Borough Council, asked was the same problem with the Japanese loading also incurred with the Dutch?

Mr Alastair Brown confirmed yes, it had been a systematic error in both cases.

A member of the public asked, how many out of the 28 canisters had been displaced?

Mr Alastair Brown, answered he was not sure but agreed to take the question away.

Action/Matters arising 5.2 – Mr Alastair Brown to reply in writing to the member of the public with the answer.

The member of the public went on to say, he had recently sent in a Freedom of Information question, asking why there had been a long time between departure Barrow and arrival Vlissingen, as PNTL were not the only people who could track vessels, which showed the Atlantic Osprey doing strange manoeuvres and slow steaming which is not legitimate. Also, having HLW on the sea for a day longer than

required, therefore, gives a security and safety risk between the French and British coast.

Also, it was the first time in over 10 years that information has been published sometime late, therefore, raising concerns that something wasn't quite right with the shipment and this was the reason for the delay. Therefore, believe this will raise more questions to be answered.

Mr Alastair Brown, answered with respect to the slow steaming, that is was not illegal to slow steam and has happened before, as operators it is felt, from a safety point of view, it is safer to slow steam rather than anchor off the coast line causing an obstruction to other vessels and yachts. When planning a voyage schedule a number of factors have to be taken into consideration, requirements of receiving country, safety and security, including international guidance not to make shipments predictable, therefore, a balance is required taking safety and security into consideration.

Mr John Goddard, of James Fisher, PNTL Ship Managers, also advised that the master is responsible for selecting the most appropriate route taking into account areas of low traffic density.

Mr Rupert Wilcox-Baker also advised the member of the public that the presentation given today had been discussed shortly after Sellafield requested the delay and we understand the public interest in such shipments. Therefore, it was immediately discussed how the information could be made public. Hence before securitising the questions under the Freedom of Information act, INS had agreed to make public the relevant information.

The member of the public went on to say another angle was that INS knew they would be hounded for answers and that was why they had decided to include the presentation. With regards to email quoting section 22, said that INS would let them know when and where the information would be published, therefore, why didn't INS let him know.

Mr Rupert Wilcox-Baker agreed to formally write to the member of the public confirming publication of the minutes which would include the relevant answers.

Secretary's Note: These are attached.

Action/Matters arising 5.3 – Mr Rupert Wilcox-Baker to write to the member of the public confirming where answers to his Freedom of Information questions could be found.

The member of the public requested a copy of the minutes of the committee.

Mr Rupert Wilcox-Baker agreed a copy of the minutes could be provided.

Action/Matters arising 5.4 – Secretary to ensure a copy of the minutes and presentation are sent to the member of the public.

5) Terminal Review

Mrs Redman updated the Committee members with regards to the Terminal Operations review.

5.1 Operations

Since the last meeting an Energy Review of the Terminal Buildings has been undertaken and a number of improvements identified, for example the fitting of timers to hot water boilers and the central heating system and a review of insulation in walls and roof spaces. These will be considered by INS and where practical implemented.

A number of minor improvements have been carried out at the Terminal including the pointing of the pump house and control tower, the replacement of two fire doors in the main Administration Building and the replacement of the first group of cable trays on the lower third of the shore crane. Also to commence shortly are repairs to the concrete adjacent to the crane rails which has deteriorated over time, in particular due to the bad weather experienced earlier in the year.

A number of further improvements are scheduled to be carried out later this financial year. These include the replacement of windows to UPVC double glazed and the upgrade of CCTV cameras.

As previously advised by Mr Brown, the Terminal continues to provide a selection services to the PNTL vessels and also the NDA fleet including:

- the loading of a single flask of HAW to Pacific Sandpiper in January and
- The loading of a single flask to the Atlantic Osprey in mid March.

In addition to the above the shore crane and port operatives have undertaken the regular stores loading of the vessels when alongside.

The Terminal remains in compliance with the International Ship and Port Security Code (ISPS).

5.2 Training

Training exercises by the Fire Brigade have been undertaken on a couple of occasions specifically looking at the evacuation of injured personnel from the shore crane.

Personnel at the Terminal have undergone various other courses, depending on their specific roles.

5.3 Visitors

Since the 4th RDTSG in September 2009 the Terminal has hosted over 20 visits with delegates from:

- Emergency Responses Planners from around the country including the Emergency Planning Officer from BBC
- SMIT Salvage Team for Familiarisation
- World Nuclear Transport Institute and representatives from Venezuela, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Ecuador
- And local MP Mr John Woodcock, earlier in the year, who enjoyed a tour round the Pacific Heron.

6) EHS&Q Review

Mr Rupert Wilcox-Baker updated Committee members with regards to the EHS&Q review.

6.1 Certifications

Lloyds Register Quality Assurance (LRQA) completed the recertification of International Nuclear Services (INS) and Pacific Nuclear Transport Limited (PNTL) management systems in early 2010, with no non compliances raised. The conclusion being that certification for both companies has been granted for a further 3 years.

The prime focus of this audit was the transition from the International Quality Management Systems standard ISO 9001:2000 to the ISO 9001:2008 version of the Quality Management Systems standard, also to reaffirm compliance with the Environmental Management Systems standard ISO 14001:2004.

All INS business locations in the UK (Risley, Pelham House & Barrow-in-Furness) was audited during this process as well as the management systems of INS Japan KK in Tokyo. The audit also included activities onboard MV Pacific Heron and the INS Report Centre in Barrow.

The audit proved a very successful event, the auditors confirming that International Nuclear Services and Pacific Nuclear Transport Limited management systems continue to be effective and well maintained.

The next surveillance audit at the Barrow Marine Terminal (BMT) is scheduled for March 2011

6.2 EH&S Policy

As INS has been operating as a stand alone business since separating from Sellafield Ltd two years ago, the legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) to review it's EH&S Policy has been fulfilled.

The initial review looked at; what the law requires, does it reflect what we do as a business, comparison with high profile Company's, guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the requirements of our accreditation body, LRQA

The policy review proposals have been submitted to the INS Executive, presentations to the INS EH&S committee and the INS INSAFE meeting. INS Assurance section has also commented and input has also been sought for Prospect Union representatives.

In May 2010, the INS Board will be invited to review the proposed new policy, comment and if deemed acceptable, approve the policy for issue. At the next meeting more detail of the policy will be provided.

6.3 Environmental

There have been no reportable environmental events either on the ships or at BMT since the last meeting.

Mrs Redman covered a number of the areas which we are aiming to reduce our carbon foot print, in line with a government initiative. Progress against the agreed environmental improvement targets for 2009/10 has been very good, and as a result of target outcome, enhancements of two targets from 2009/10 will be included into 2010/11.

- Study in to Home working for INS personnel.
- Investigate means of reduction of energy usage in INS offices in line with the upcoming Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme.
- Carry out an energy usage review of the Terminal, to review impact of latest changes.
- Investigate the potential savings from introducing a waste compactor to BMT.
- Assessment of Bunker lines at BMT.
- Assist in increasing the regulatory allowable levels of acceptable fissile material in packages.

Enhancement from:

- Investigation into energy usage in INS offices.
- The energy usage review of the BMT

The targets for 2010/11 have been proposed and will be finalised when the INS Board reach a decision over the proposed new EH&S Policy implementation.

Barrow Marine Terminal Target examples:

From the energy review of the BMT last year, proposed targets for 2010/11 have been submitted. They include 'quick win' improvements and longer projects:

- Improve the thermostatic and timing controls of the heating system.
 - Upgrade lighting on the terminal with more energy efficient fittings.
 - Place in timer control settings on the mess room boiler.
 - Upgrade external doors where existing ones are un-insulated.
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- Improving the roof insulation of the Terminal building
 - Investigate the presence of cavity wall filling and the possibility to retro-install.
 - Consider Installation of a stand alone Combi Boiler in the Gatehouse to avoid the need for a dead leg in the present system

6.4 Conventional Safety

6.4.1 *INS*

Within INS, unfortunately there have been two Days Away Cases, in the last 12 months. One event occurred in January 2010 and the other in March 2010. The first event was again a slip/trip/fall event which happened at Pelham House, during the bad weather spell. The other was a ruptured ear drum whilst travelling on company business on a flight from the Netherlands.

6.4.2 *BMT*

BMT still continues to have a good record, having now achieved over Five years without an accident that resulted in time away from work. There have been no minor injurious events at the BMT this year.

BMT management and Port Operatives played a major part in INS delivering consignments of UK high level waste to Japan and the Netherlands. Management of operations and the handling of the 113 tonne packages by the Port Operatives were performed without successfully, under the watchful eye of the media.

6.4.3 *Ships*

Moving on to the ships, PNTL accident performance remains very good with no Days Away Cases for three years and the Total Recordable Case Frequency for the INF Fleet has reduced to zero, due to there being no recordable injuries in the previous 12 months.

There have been five minor injury accidents reported by PNTL seafarers this calendar year requiring first aid treatment only. These, largely related to slips, trips and falls in extreme weather/sea conditions, in particular in the Southern Ocean.

Within PNTL a number of non injurious events have been due to equipment failure on various ships. The equipment has been repaired and particularly with respect to the Heron, the learning has been shared with the new fleet.

6.4.4 Near Misses

PNTL (not related to behavioural safety topic) have reported eight near misses for 2009/10.

Near misses (or non-injurious incident) on the ships are reported so that all personnel on all ships can learn the lessons; if appropriate Behavioural Safety Observations are sent to ships for the following month.

PNTL near miss reports, although often behaviourally based, are not exclusively so and have sometimes involved actual or potential failures of tools, equipment etc.

- A seafarer escaped injury, after avoiding being trapped behind a heavy steel cargo door while painting – no warning signs
- Potential damage to electrical cable - generator power cable fallen between the quay and the ship's side
- Batteries found severely corroded in signalling torches
- Seafarer opened laundry door which made contact with another seafarer who was loading a washing machine behind the door – poor ergonomics and layout.
- An aerosol and three batteries found inside a bag of garbage when inspected prior to being incinerated
- Table top it fell off its securing bracket whilst cleaning - due to the retaining screws being loose.
- Tripping hazard found, corner of the floor covering became detached
- An item of ship stores was observed not to be suitably secured.

All reports are taken through the Learning from Experience, both in the office and onboard the ships. Recently, during the volcanic ash restrictions, we had 15 people abroad; we are now in the process of carrying out a review of lessons learnt.

6.5 Radiological Safety

For all voyages completed in the last twelve month's, the radiation exposure to seafarers and BMT Port Operatives continued to be extremely low, i.e. individual doses less than 1 milliSievert, which is the internationally accepted annual dose limit for the general public and the lowest category set by the IAEA for occupational control arrangements.

6.6 Terminal Management

Final observation, which was briefly mentioned at the 4th RDTSG, Mr Bernard Payne was appointed Terminal Manager in September 2009. Bernard's extensive career background in engineering, marine operations and later with PNTL, supported by a competent assistant manager will undoubtedly benefit the operation of the BMT.

The restructuring of the INS BMT management has been controlled under the INS management of change process has been successful and maintained BMT's safety record thought out the change process.

ACTION No.2: INS - Mr Wilcox-Baker to included near misses within Q& E review. *Complete included within review above.*

7) Direct Rail Services (DRS) Review

Mrs Foran updated the Committee members with regards to DRS review.

Since the 4th RDTSG meeting DRS has delivered 100% of all nuclear services requested with 92% arrival on time. The 8% not delivered on time were mainly due to infrastructure delays.

For non-nuclear services DRS operated 99.9% on all customer requests, with the 0.1% due to the line near Aberdeen being flooded, and with 93% arrival on time. These figures continue to rank DRS as the most reliable Freight Operating Company in the UK.

7.1 News Update

DRS recently received an award of recognition from Allerdale Borough Council for their contribution in assisting the West Cumbrian communities affected by the recent serious flooding. DRS, within 48 hours of receiving request from Allerdale Borough Council, ran additional shuttle services between the areas cut-off due to the destruction of a number of major road bridges. This service is anticipated to run until the end of May.

DRS have successfully delivered to Network Rail the snow patrolling, snow clearing and de-icing service provision for the winter of 2009/10. During the winter of 2009/10, the UK suffered from severe snowfall, especially in Northern Scotland. DRS was able to react at short notice, providing locomotives fitted with mini snow ploughs and flexible experienced train-crew for line patrolling/snow clearance work thus keeping the Highland Mainline between Inverness and Perth opened and any disruptions to passenger and freight traffic kept to a minimum.

DRS were also please to report that they had also been involved with the first shipment of highly active waste which left Sellafield in January 2010 on its return journey to Japan and the second shipment made in March 2010 with the cargo headed for Holland.

This repatriation of waste back to the countries of origin is in line with both global governmental agreements and British Government policy.

7.2 New Business

DRS has delivered a long standing relationship with MAGNOX for the provision of rail transport of spent fuel from Magnox power stations all over the country to Sellafield in West Cumbria for reprocessing. Lead by DRS Commercial Dept, recent discussions have resulted in the extension of existing agreement to 2016 to meet the changing

requirement of the Magnox business.

The Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg in Cumbria has awarded DRS with a 5 year contract for the provision of rail operations, siding inspection and maintenance services.

7.3 Events

Every year DRS hosts an Open Day, to raise money for local charities, with the location alternating between Crewe and Carlisle. This years Open Day at Gresty Bridge Depot in Crewe is due to be held on Saturday 10th July 2010. Ms Foran stressed that any member of the Committee who had an interest in trains could contact her for tickets to the Open Day.

DRS in partnership with Network Rail and Northern Rail will also be running a charity train from Workington to York in aid of local charities, Solway Viking. DRS' chosen charities are Wasdale Mountain Rescue and Cockermouth Mountain Rescue. Both charities have been chosen for the immense rescue effort during the severe flooding in Cumbria. Further information can be found on the DRS website, www.directrailservices.com.

DRS is continuing to carrying out some NDA facing works – meeting with Regional Managers in NDA to see how DRS can assist in the business, which has included continued participation in all NDA stakeholder conferences and dialogues, with the recent appointment of a new NDA chairman Tony Fountain, and NDA representative Alan Moore, the new chairman of DRS.

Councillor Eric Wood, asked were DRS recently involved with the Special trains to Wembley. Eva, responded, yes, with the Pride of Cumbria locomotive provided to pull the trains.

8) Any other business

8.1 Support for Barrow Area

Mrs Lesley O'Leary gave Committee members an update with regards to charity donations for the Barrow Area.

Unfortunately, 2009/10 financial year has seen very few requests for donations/sponsorship from INS or PNTL. Since September:

PNTL recently helped the Barrow Citizen Advise Bureau to purchase a number of new computers and printers

PNTL has also been able to help the Barrow Sea Cadets to purchase a number of camp beds, in order to improve facilities when training exercises are taking place at various units across Cumbria

A PNTL crew member has had a long standing relationship with the Jubilee Sailing Trust, and this year PNTL have been able to support a disabled adult and helper to take part in a voyage of approximately 10 days.

This year INS/PNTL decided to offer match-funding to employees, with the word spreading quickly, as we approached the end of the financial year. We have managed to offer match funding to 18 employees who have organised or been involved in fund raising activities for a number of different charities. Including:

- Comic relief
- Great North Air Ambulance
- Various Hospice's in Cumbria, Cheshire and South West England
- Cancer Research
- British Heart Foundation
- And various schools

Also, this year INS asked all employees to nominate and vote for a charity that as a group we could help support. Employees nominated "the Graham Dament Forget Me Not Fund", in support of Leukaemia Research, as this was close to many hearts as Graham had worked within Flask Operations. A team of INS employees organised a number of different events during the year to raise money, including a 45 mile Bike Ride from Southport to Risley, with four INS employees completing the ride. Other events organised included.

- Cake Sale(s)
- Football cards
- Guess the baby competition
- Christmas Quiz/cards
- Easter raffle, etc

Mr Alastair Brown, on behalf of INS, passed on his thanks to Lesley and the Team within INS for the effort they had put into raising funds.

8.2 Barrow Development

Mr Huck gave Committee members an update on progress, in relation to the Barrow Docks Development.

With regards to the Waterfront, the new road within phase 1, opened approximately a month ago, with 8 hectares are now serviced and landscaped. It is anticipated that the first unit will be available in four months to the public sector. Marketing of the Site is the responsibility of Northwest Development, who is finding things are moving slowly, due to the recession.

The second phase, Marina Village, approximately 85 to 87% of the land has been purchased, with 13 parcels of land still to be purchased. The developer is still onboard, with results from a recent public examination expected at the end of May

2010. Everything is moving forward, but slower than originally planned, due to financial areas.

9) Date & venue of next meeting

The next meeting is anticipated to be held around the end of 2010, at Barrow Town Hall. The secretary will notify members when a date has been set.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked members for attending the 5th RDTSG meeting.

10) Summary of Actions/Matters Arising

| Action number | Description | Name | Status |
|---------------|---|-----------|----------|
| 1. | Secretary to contact Cumbria County Council | Secretary | On-going |
| 2. | INS to include near misses within Q& E review | RW-B | Complete |
| 5.1 | Copy of Japanese HLW photograph to be sent to DRS | AAB | |
| 5.2 | INS to reply in writing to the member of the public's question with regards to the 28 canisters | AAB | |
| 5.3 | INS to write to the member of the public confirming where answers to his Freedom of Information questions could be found. | RW-B | |
| 5.4 | INS to ensure a copy of the minutes and presentation are sent to the member of the public | Secretary | |

Distribution

Committee Members

Mrs S Williams, Sellafield Limited
Mr B Payne, INS Terminal Manager
Mr M Forwood
PNTL website
INS website

CORE FoIA questions

Re: HLW transport to Holland on Atlantic Osprey: Could you raise the following, under the Freedom of Information Act, with International Nuclear Services (INS) or other appropriate quarter.

The HLW flask was loaded onto the Atlantic Osprey around midday Thursday 11th March 2010 with the expectation of departing Barrow on the evening tide the same day. Departure was however delayed for 24 hours, the ship sailing on the evening tide Friday 12th March.

Q1. What was the reason for the 24 hour delay ?

With a 12th March evening departure from Barrow, the Atlantic Osprey might be expected to arrive at its Vlissingen destination within around two days - at some time on 14th March. In the event, the ship docked at Vlissingen around 2100 hrs on Tuesday 16th March - ie 4 days after leaving Barrow. Further, AIS ship tracking systems showed the Atlantic Osprey to have dramatically reduced speed and diverted from its course to Vlissingen on a numerous occasions from 14th March onwards -until its arrival at Vlissingen. Effectively, AIS tracking shows the Atlantic Osprey to have been 'swanning around' somewhat aimlessly between the Dutch and UK coastlines for a period well in excess of 24 hours.

Q2. What was the reason for the ship's speed reductions and course changes for a period well in excess of 24 hours ?

Q3. Are such delays not contrary to the conditions of the transport licence which require nuclear cargos to be delivered without undue delay ?

Q4. Are such delays, in busy shipping channels, not only compromising the safety of the cargo but also the safety of other marine traffic ?

INS answers

The repatriation of Dutch highly active waste was completed safely and successfully and to schedule marking a further successful reduction in foreign waste stored at Sellafield.

When undertaking these transports, priority is given to the safety and security of the cargo, our employees, the public and the environment. Speed is not the principal factor and we operate with great care and diligence - as we believe would be reasonably expected - to ensure that safety and security is maintained. We are also very careful to ensure that we comply with the terms of the required licences and approvals and all of these requirements were met in this case.

We do not comment on the detailed arrangements for any shipments. However, in the planning of all shipments we must take into account a wide range of factors which may affect the duration of the shipment. These might

arise during consigning, the rail journey and loading, the impact of adverse weather and specific needs of customers, infrastructure providers and statutory authorities in the UK and overseas. Nor, for security reasons, do we want to make the pattern of our voyages predictable. This voyage was no exception. The whole operation was conducted safely and smoothly.

Subject to the limitation that we never discuss the specific individual details of our shipments the answers to the individual questions are as follows:

Q1 - Containers are loaded into the flask in accordance with a pre-agreed loading plan which gives the positions of each of the containers within the flask. During unloading of the VRR flask in Japan, it was found that although the correct containers were loaded into the flask channels (each channel holds four containers) the channel numbers did not correspond to the numbers on the loading plan provided to the customer. This issue was investigated by Sellafield Ltd and traced to an anomaly in the Flask Loading Operator Instruction.

Whilst this had no safety significance, it did have a minor operational impact for the customer.

Having received information from Japan prior to the Dutch return, the loading arrangements for the Dutch VRR shipment were checked. This check caused a minor delay in the departure of the shipment from Barrow to the Netherlands. Arrival was however on time to programme. This check was taken with the full knowledge of regulators and customers and the transport was carried out successfully and in full regulatory compliance.

Q2 - The Dutch authorities requested that the MVAO arrive in Vlissingen at a specific time. To achieve arrival at a specific time following a sea journey of some 650 miles, typically taking some three days, there must be considerable contingency in the allowed journey time to take account of the possibility of bad weather. In this case the weather was fair and accordingly the voyage contingency time was expended towards the end of the journey and away from main shipping lanes.

Q3 - The cargo was delivered in accordance with all of the relevant national and international regulations.

Q4 - The safety of the crew, the cargo and other vessels are of paramount importance in our marine operations. The navigation and operation of the MVAO on this occasion ensured that the high standards of marine safety required for our operations were maintained at all times. (see also answer to question 2)