

## B30 Main Points

1. B30 is a storage pond for the storage of spent Magnox fuel, partly of military origin (which probably means from Calder Hall and Chapelcross). It is open air. Pond visibility is restricted by algae. It was used from the 1950s to 1985.
2. BNFL only estimates the waste quantities stored in B30.
3. Due to the high radiation dose, poor visibility of the pond water and the condition of the nuclear material. Euratom inspectors do not have easy and safe access to the nuclear material to physically verify the operators accountancy declarations.
4. The last Euratom inspection took place in March 2003. BNFL has been informed after every inspection since 1986 that no satisfactory conclusions could be drawn from the verification activities performed.
5. BNFL has presented various informal plans since the 1980s, but none of these plans have been implemented.
6. In view of the high plutonium quantities in the pond, a transfer of nuclear material to a suitable location and its quantification is "highly overdue".
7. The pond contains old, unidentified fuel stored in skips and sludge accumulated at the bottom of the pond. A recent video inspection by BNFL confirmed the problematic status of the pond contents. Some of the fuel has corroded.
8. According to BNFL estimates, the material in the pond contains about 1.3 tonnes of plutonium, about 400kg of which is contained in corroded fuel located on the pond floor as sludge. This is a significant amount of strategically important material not properly accounted for.
9. As a result of the access problems Euratom is unable to confirm that nuclear material has not been diverted from its declared use by BNFL. Euratom describes this as a "clear infringement of essential Euratom safeguards requirements".
10. In March 2003, BNFL explained its latest plan to Euratom to retrieve and process the material in B30. This plan would take 10 years. Euratom was not satisfied with the methods foreseen by BNFL for the quantification of the material and requested improvements.
11. In its quarterly report for 1 April to 30 June 2000, NII said "insufficient priority has been given to this project and that there are reasonably practicable measures which could be implemented to improve safety". NII issued an improvement notice in 2001.
12. In a letter to the Commission dated 8<sup>th</sup> December 2003, UK authorities say: "It has long been recognised that conditions in B30 mean the safeguards verification activities that can be carried out are limited (eg poor visibility ... and dose rates mean that any one person's working time on the plant is restricted to less than an hour a day"

13. The Commission has informed the UK authorities of the need to verify levels of radioactivity in the air, water and soil around B30.
14. The Commission's legal assessment says B30 constitutes infringements of the law with regard to keeping operating records, accounting for nuclear materials and a failure to enable inspectors access. There have been continuous breaches since the mid-1980s. Further delay in overcoming the continuous infringements cannot be tolerated. Should the UK further delay the implementation of remedies, the Commission will proceed by imposing sanctions on BNFL.
15. If agreed, the Commission Directive will force the UK to submit by 1<sup>st</sup> May a comprehensive plan to ensure compliance within reasonable time limits such that all nuclear material is properly accounted for and accessible for physical verification. This entails the rapid retrieval of the nuclear material from the pond and its satisfactory quantification. The UK will have to report progress every 6 months.