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| ONR Site Report  EDF – Hartlepool Power Station |



ONR Site Report

EDF - Hartlepool Power Station

**Report for period**: 1 October - 31 December 2024

**Authored by**: Site Inspector

**Approved by**: Superintending Inspector

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Foreword

This report is issued as part of our commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the above site available to the public. Reports are distributed to members for the Hartlepool Local Community Liaison Committee and are also available on our [website](https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/publication-search/?type=lLCSSGReportPublication).

Our site inspectors usually attend Hartlepool Local Community Liaison Committee meetings where these reports are presented and will respond to any questions raised there. Any person wishing to inquire about matters covered by this report should contact us via email at contact@onr.gov.uk.

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# Inspections

## Date(s) of inspection

Our site inspector made inspections on the following dates during the report period 1 October - 31 December 2024.

* 22-23 October
* 12-14 November
* 3-4 December
* 10-11 December

# Routine matters

## Inspections

Inspections are undertaken as part of the process for monitoring compliance with:

* the conditions attached by ONR to the nuclear site licence granted under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (NIA65) (as amended);
* the Energy Act 2013;
* the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA74); and
* regulations made under HSWA74, for example the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR99).

The inspections entail monitoring the licensee’s actions on the site in relation to incidents, operations, maintenance, projects, modifications, safety case changes and any other matters that may affect safety. The licensee is required to make and implement adequate arrangements under the conditions attached to the licence in order to ensure legal compliance. Inspections seek to judge both the adequacy of these arrangements and their implementation.

In this period, routine inspections of Hartlepool Power Station covered the following:

* examination, maintenance, inspection and testing;
* emergency preparedness;
* radioactive waste management;
* conventional (non-nuclear) health and safety;
* security.

Members of the public, who would like further information about our inspection activities during the reporting period, can view site Inspection Records on our [website](https://www.onr.org.uk/).

Should you have any queries regarding our inspection activities, please email [contact@onr.gov.uk](mailto:contact@onr.gov.uk).

**Annual review of safety, security, and the environment**

The annual review of safety, security, and the environment was held in October 2024. The meeting was attended by ourselves and inspectors from the Environment Agency. The annual review provided an opportunity for the site to present a summary of performance and issues over the previous 12 months and the key areas of focus and investment over the next few years.

**LC 34/34 Waste management inspection**

This was a joint inspection conducted between ourselves and the Environment Agency. The aim of the inspection was to gain assurance that radioactive waste generated on the site is managed in accordance with regulatory requirements. The inspection looked at arrangements for minimising waste and the quantity of radioactive waste accumulated on site. Future waste demands were also considered for end of generation.

The inspection also evaluated the implementation of arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that radioactive material and radioactive waste is always adequately controlled or contained, to ensure that it cannot leak/escape, and that no such leak/escape can occur without being detected.

We considered that arrangements for both LC32 and LC34 were being adequately implemented onsite and a ‘GREEN’ rating (no formal action) was awarded for both.

**COMAH**

This was a joint inspection between ONR and the EA. The aim of this inspection was to sample evidence to ensure that Hartlepool were compliant with Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015 (COMAH). During the inspection shortfalls were identified relating to a system design change that had failed to correctly specify maintenance schedule requirements. As such this system had not been adequately maintained or inspected for several years. ONR considered that the shortfalls were sufficient to award an AMBER rating (seek improvement) and a regulatory issue will be raised to monitor the response to the identified issues.

**LC2 and LC16 – Site boundary and site plans**

This inspection was conducted jointly with our safety and security inspectors. The inspection aimed to evaluate Hartlepool's compliance with nuclear site licence conditions for marking of the site boundary (LC2) and site plans, designs, and specifications (LC16). A ‘GREEN’ rating was awarded for both LC2 and LC16 however, two level 4 regulatory issues were raised to track minor shortfall improvements.

**Level 1 exercise**

The purpose of this intervention was to observe the annual level 1 emergency exercise for EDF to demonstrate that arrangements for emergency response, required by LC 11 are adequately implemented at the site.

The exercise scenario and objectives were agreed with us prior to the exercise. They were designed to evaluate the response to a site incident relating to a small seismic event that resulted in a crane toppling and causing damage to a fuel oil tank and essential cooling water systems. Casualty management was also demonstrated during the exercise.

Our inspectors considered that the performance by the station demonstrated an adequate response and met regulatory expectations against LC11 and the objectives of the exercise scenario.

## Other work

During the period, our site inspector held routine meetings with station staff to monitor the performance of the site by:

* Reviewing the current plant status and all open regulatory issues associated with Hartlepool Power Station with the Technical and Safety Support Manager.
* Meeting on a weekly basis with the site-based Independent Nuclear Assurance team to ensure the internal regulator function remains effective and verifying information provided by the station.

# Non-routine matters

Licensees are required to have arrangements to respond to non-routine matters and events. Our inspectors judge the adequacy of the licensee’s response, including actions taken to implement any necessary improvements.

**Preliminary enquiries: low power event**

We conducted preliminary enquiries into a potential safety case shortfall at the site. This related to site conducting a period of low power operation due to the need to conduct a condenser tube leak repair. Operating at periods of low power had been challenged in a separate interim safety case at the time of the defect. We conducted enquiries to ensure that the appropriate advice had been considered during the decision making process and that potential gaps in the safety case had been adequately challenged before conducting changes in plant conditions. We found no evidence that the unit had been operated outside the extant safety case.

**Preliminary enquiries low log flux event (INF – 4512)**

We were informed in October of an event at Hartlepool Power Station that resulted in reactor 2 being operated outside the safety case limits and conditions of operation. As the event was reported as INES 1 it met the requirement to conduct preliminary enquiries to see if an investigation was required.

At the time of the event reactor 2 was being returned to service following a trepanning and refuelling outage. The reactor was being pressure cycled to improve gas purity following a period of being in an air atmosphere. Whilst pressure cycling the control room team mistakenly authorised a maintenance team request to conduct a reset of the low log flux trip settings. Changing this trip setting meant that when the reactor pressure was pressure cycled to a lower pressure the conditions within the safety case were breached. We are content that an appropriate investigation took place by EDF and that suitable actions to prevent a repeat event have been identified. We do not consider that any further regulatory enforcement was required. There was no danger to staff or the public due to this event.

**Enforcement letter – asbestos containing fuses**

In August we were notified that asbestos containing fuses had been installed to plant at Hartlepool. The spares were held within the station’s stores and should have been quarantined and disposed of as asbestos waste. Installing them into plant was a breach of the REACH Enforcement Regulations 2008. We issued EDF with an enforcement letter with several actions that must be carried out. Our inspectors have held discussions with both the site and EDF central staff and are content that suitable actions have been taken and that the actions from our enforcement letter are being progressed. Our inspectors will continue to engage with EDF to ensure that the enforcement letter actions are adequately closed out.

**Enforcement letter – manual handling**

In October we received a report detailing an injury to an employee’s finger whilst carrying out manual handling at site. During this incident we consider that the site had failed to adequately reduce the risk to their employees and had breached the manual handling operations regulations. Therefore, we issued an enforcement letter to site demanding improvements to ensure compliance with the required legislation. During engagements with the site following the incident we became aware of actions that have been initiated to improve their arrangements which will be followed up by our inspectors in due course.

# Regulatory activity

We may issue formal documents to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Under nuclear site licence conditions, we issue regulatory documents, which either permit an activity or require some form of action to be taken; these are usually collectively termed ‘Licence Instruments’ (LIs) but can take other forms. In addition, inspectors may take a range of enforcement actions, to include issuing an enforcement notice.

* The following LIs, enforcement notices and enforcement letters have been issued during the period:

**Table 1: Licence Instruments and enforcement notices issued by ONR during this period**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Type | Reference | Description |
| 17/12/2024 | Agreement | LI 578 | Extension to the operating period of reactor 1 until 10 May 2025. |
| 22/11/2024 | Enforcement letter | ONR-EL-24-28 | Enforcement letter due to breach of REACH regulations 2008. |
| 10/01/2025\* | Enforcement letter | ONR-EL-24-41 | Enforcement letter due to breach of Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. |
|  |  |  |  |

Reports detailing the above regulatory decisions can be found on the ONR [website](https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/publication-search/?type=projectAssessmentReportPublication).

\* *This enforcement letter was issued in quarter 1 of 2025 but is included in this report to align with the event date in quarter 4 of 2024.*

# News from ONR

For the latest news and information from us, please read and subscribe to our regular email newsletter ‘ONR News’ at <https://www.onr.org.uk/news/newsletter/>.

# Contacts

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# References

**There are no sources in the current document.**