Policy paper: Euratom exit: factsheets

Updated: The state of current progress with third country arrangements has been updated, particularly the signing of the UK-US NCA. The description of the ratification process has been updated in line with the new agreements passed in respect of Euratom.

These factsheets provide an overview of the main topics related to the Nuclear Safeguards Bill, which will establish a UK nuclear safeguards regime as we leave Euratom.

Press release: Natural flood management – part of the nation's flood resilience

The Environment Agency has today (31 October) published data, case studies and evidence about the role of natural flood management in reducing flood risk. Working with natural processes to reduce flood risk is not a new concept but this is the first time that all the evidence has been brought together, with the intention of enabling more uptake.

'The evidence behind natural flood management' contains more than 60 case studies from across England and explores how successful the approach is, how it could be used elsewhere and what research may still be needed.

Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. Examples include: restoring bends in rivers, changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water and creating saltmarshes on the coast to absorb wave energy.

At Hesketh, on the Lancashire coast, a 'managed realignment' scheme has created more than 300 hectares of saltmarsh which protects 143 residential properties, 3 commercial buildings and 300 hectares of farm land. Coastal schemes such as this not only dissipate wave and tidal energy but can also reduce impact on defences, reduce tidal surges and lead to slightly lower water levels at defences.

The study includes a project in Debenham, Suffolk, where modelling has shown that installing a range of natural flood management features along the River Deben could provide more than 30,000 m3 of water storage – thereby reducing annual average damages to properties and farmland by 31%.

On Lustrum Beck, in Stockton-on-Tees, modelling showed that providing 100,000 m3 of storage in the upstream catchment, using wetlands, features to reduce run-off and river restoration, could reduce flows by more than 10%.

John Curtin, Executive Director of Flood & Coastal Risk Management at the Environment Agency, said:

> I often think improving flood resilience is like a mosaic, many different pieces need to come together to complete the resilience picture. Natural flood management is an important part of that mosaic when used alongside more traditional engineering. These projects also provide fantastic opportunities for community involvement and leadership.
>
> Many of our flood schemes already feature a mixture of hard and soft engineering and natural flood management. It can be a cost-effective and sustainable way to manage flood risk alongside traditional engineering, while creating habitat for wildlife and helping regenerate rural and urban areas through tourism.

Natural flood management works best when a 'catchment based approach' is taken, where a plan is developed to manage the flow of water along the whole length of a river catchment from its source to sea. This way, natural processes can be used upstream and on the coast to compliment engineered flood defences – such as walls and weirs – in populated areas.

Natural flood management not only reduces flood risk it can also achieve multiple benefits for people and wildlife, helping restore habitats, improve water quality and helping make catchments more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

The Environment Agency hopes that the evidence directory will help flood risk managers, local authority engineers, non-governmental organisations and community flood action groups to incorporate natural approaches to flood risk management in to their plans to reduce flood risk.

Earlier this year the government announced a further £15m for natural flood management schemes across England.

'The evidence behind natural flood management' was launched at the CIWEM (Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management) Conference in London.

Press release: Jail and suspended sentences for permit breaches that led to fire

Corporate officers working for Nottinghamshire Recycling Limited (NRL) and 2 who worked for Park Farming Limited (PFL) have been sentenced today (Monday 30 October 2017) in Sheffield Crown Court after breaching environmental permits at 3 sites in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and Kiveton and South Anston in South Yorkshire.

The environmental offences committed helped maximise the companies' financial gain at the expense of the environment, and led to a series of fires on 1 of NRL's sites at Shireoaks Road in Worksop in 2013 and 2014.

Repeat offenders

All 3 sites were operated illegally despite the fact that NRL had previously been convicted in 2011 for offences it had committed at Shireoaks Road.

Kevin Malcom Burgess of Manton Forest Farm, Worksop, Warren Richard Steele of Drury Lane, Doncaster, David Vincent Berry of Orchard Court, South Normanton, Edward Charles Freeman of Stephen Hill, Sheffield, Martin Crowther of Chapel Rise, Anston, Sheffield and Peter Charles Sanderson of Peak Close, Bramley, Rotherham, were sentenced on Monday 30 October 2017 at Sheffield Crown Court.

Defendants linked to NRL continued to act illegally after the company had previously been convicted in 2011. Documents discovered during the course of the Environment Agency's investigation clearly demonstrated that company officers were fully aware that the sites were being operated illegally.

Risk to human health

Prosecuting on behalf of the Environment Agency, Chris Badger told the court that NRL and PFL repeatedly operated outside the terms of their environmental permits for financial gain. He added that NRL officers created significant risk to the environment and harm to human health. Among other permit breaches, waste was stored in huge quantities outside of the businesses' permitted areas. Waste was blended at both the Worksop and Kiveton site in an attempt to avoid higher rates of landfill tax.

The company paid no heed to repeated warnings about the illegal storage of waste at all 3 sites, and the fire risks at Worksop. The defendants' conduct resulted in 5 fires at NRL's Worksop site during 2013 and 2014.

Large stockpiles of various waste deposited illegally by the companies at the 3 sites still remain and continue to have an environmental impact. Both NRL and PFL entered administration during the period of the investigation. They

have since gone into liquidation.

‘Deliberate’, ‘negligent’ and ‘reckless’

His Honour Judge Robert Moore said that the conduct of four of the companies’ directors in breaking the law had been deliberate, while a fifth had acted negligently. The actions of a site manager were judged to have been reckless in aiding and abetting the offending that took place at Kiveton and South Anston.

In mitigation, the judge noted that all defendants had pleaded guilty to the charges that they faced and applied an appropriate reduction to their sentences. He also commented that the defendants had not made personal financial gain as a result of the offences. All 6 defendants were of previous good character.

The sentences imposed by the judge were as follows:

1. Kevin Burgess – 21 months’ immediate custodial sentence. Disqualification from being a director for 7 years.
2. Edward Freeman – 8 months’ custody suspended for 2 years with a requirement to perform 150 hours of unpaid work. Contribution towards prosecution costs of £5,000.
3. Warren Steele – 6 months’ custody suspended for 2 years with a requirement to perform 100 hours of unpaid work. Contribution towards prosecution costs of £5,000.
4. Peter Sanderson – 8 months’ custody suspended for 2 years with a requirement to perform 150 hours of unpaid work. Contribution towards prosecution costs of £5,000.
5. Martin Crowther – 12-month community order with a requirement to perform 80 hours of unpaid work. Contribution towards prosecution costs of £1,500.
6. David Berry – 12-month community order with a requirement to perform 100 hours of unpaid work. Contribution towards prosecution costs of £5,000.

Commenting after the hearing, Environment Agency Waste Regulatory Specialist Iain Regan said:

> This was a large and complex investigation, and one in which Nottinghamshire Recycling Limited at various stages deliberately attempted to mislead us as the regulator. Companies like NRL distort the waste market by unfairly undercutting legitimate waste businesses, making it difficult for compliant firms to compete. This causes erosion of the legal waste sector and standards, resulting in an industry which is vulnerable to domination by illegal operators who have no concern for protecting the public or the environment.
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> We hope this case assures the legitimate waste industry and the public that we will investigate businesses who deliberately or recklessly flout the law, and that the sentences passed today send

a clear message that behaviour as exhibited by NRL, PFL and their management is unacceptable.

The EA has brought this case to a successful outcome by dedicated hard work and professionalism.

Offences

1. Operating a regulated facility except under and in accordance with an environmental permit, contrary to Regulations 38(1)(a) and 41(1) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 – Kevin Burgess, Warren Steele, David Berry, Edward Freeman and Peter Sanderson. Worksop offence.

2. Keeping controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health, contrary to Sections 33(1)(c), 33(6) and 157 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Kevin Burgess, Warren Steele, David Berry and Edward Freeman. Worksop offence.

3. Operating a regulated facility except under and in accordance with an environmental permit, contrary to Regulations 38(1)(a) and 41(1) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 – Kevin Burgess, Warren Steele, David Berry and Edward Freeman. Martin Crowther, at the same place and time, did aid, abet, counsel and procure those persons to commit the said offence. Kiveton offence.

4. Operating a regulated facility except under and in accordance with an environmental permit, contrary to Regulations 38(1)(a) and 41(1) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 – Kevin Burgess. Martin Crowther, at the same place and time, did aid abet, counsel and procure Kevin Burgess to commit the said offence. South Anston offence.

Official Statistics: Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates in England and Wales: 2008 to

September 2017

Information about certificates on the energy efficiency of domestic and non-domestic buildings in England and Wales that have been constructed, sold, or let since 2008, and of larger public authority buildings since 2008. These statistics do not cover the entire building stock across England and Wales.

Figures are drawn from 2 datasets on the Energy Performance of Buildings Registers:

- Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for domestic and non-domestic properties covering England and Wales
- Display Energy Certificates (DECs) for larger buildings occupied by public authorities in England and Wales.

Research and analysis: Working with natural processes to reduce flood risk

Updated: The Evidence Directory report was updated in February 2018. The alterations include updates to the wording in Figure 1.3, additional references to literature on fluvial audits, and greater cross-reference to the Brackenhurst case study.

Working with Natural Processes (WWNP) to reduce flood and coastal erosion risk (FCRM) involves implementing measures that help to protect, restore and emulate the natural functions of catchments, floodplains, rivers and the coast. WWNP takes many different forms and can be applied in urban and rural areas, and on rivers, estuaries and coasts.

There has been much research on WWNP, but it has never been synthesised into one location. This has meant that it has been hard for flood risk managers to access up-to-date information on WWNP measures and to understand their potential benefits.

The outputs can be used by those planning projects which include WWNP measures to help understand:

- their potential FCRM benefits and multiple benefits
- any gaps in knowledge
- where it has been done before and any lessons learnt

- where in a catchment they might be most effective