

SEPA and Health & Safety Executive announce joint investigation into Mossmorran complex at community meeting as operating permit variations to be served on operators

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The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) & the Health and Safety Executive today (Friday 8th June 2018) announced a joint investigation into ExxonMobil Chemical Ltd and Shell UK Limited, the operators of the Mossmorran petrochemical plants in Fife.

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- Scottish Environment Protection Agency & the Health and Safety Executive announce joint investigation into Mossmorran complex following April 'final warning' letters for environmental non-compliance.
- Operating permit variations to be served on operators following a review (announced in April) to strengthen noise and vibration controls.
- October, March and May flaring incidents and monitoring data remain under investigation to avoid prejudice to future enforcement action.
- SEPA Chief Executive Terry A'Hearn meets MP, MSPs, Councillors and communities to hear first-hand accounts of local impacts.

The move follows the serving of Final Warning Letters on both companies by the agency in April 2018 related to "preventable and unacceptable" unplanned flaring during June 2017.

Operating permit variations are to be served on ExxonMobil Chemical Ltd and Shell UK Limited following a review announced in April, to strengthen noise and vibration controls. These will be published on SEPA's website next week.

Hearing first-hand accounts of the constituency MP, MSPs, Councillors and communities, SEPA Chief Executive, Terry A'Hearn, explained why October, March and May flaring incidents and monitoring data required to remain under investigation to avoid prejudice to future enforcement action.

Speaking after the community meeting in Kirkcaldy, SEPA Chief Executive, Terry A'Hearn, said:

"Every day, SEPA works to protect and enhance Scotland's environment and compliance with Scotland's environmental rules is simply non-negotiable.

"We were clear that unplanned flaring in June 2017 was preventable and unacceptable and we issued final warnings to both companies in that regard. Despite that, communities have endured further unplanned flaring in October, March and again in May.

"We've listened carefully to community calls for a root and branch review and today's announcement of a joint investigation by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) & the Health & Safety Executive will examine issues at both sites.

"But more than that, in April we promised a review of operating permits. Operating permit variations will be served on ExxonMobil Chemical Ltd and Shell UK in the next week. These permits are legal documents which set out what each operator must do under law.

"It's right that people want to know more about October, March and May flaring incidents. That said, people want action not words which is why I've come personally to explain why these incidents remain under investigation and why we need to avoid prejudice to future enforcement action.

"We're listening to the community and it's important the companies do too."

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