

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2016**

Question

Further to reports that that potassium iodide tablets have been issued to those living close to Cap de la Hague, can the Chief Minister advise members:

- (a) what contact, if any, he has with the French Authorities regarding safety at the nuclear site;
- (b) what notification Jersey would receive (nature and timing) if there was an incident which resulted in the release of nuclear material;
- (c) how the Island would deal with such an incident; and
- (d) whether the Island has a stock of potassium iodide tablets?

Answer

What contact, if any, he has with the French Authorities regarding safety at the nuclear site;

The Emergency Planning Officer is in regular contact with the French Authorities and Emergency Planning colleagues in Bureau des îles-Anglo-Normandes (BIAN) to monitor issues relating to the Norman coastal Nuclear facilities. Last year the Chief Ministers of Jersey and Guernsey travelled to France to sign a cooperation agreement with La Manche and Lower Normandy. The French nuclear facilities were discussed during the meeting and the Emergency Planning Officer signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Jersey and Guernsey and the Préfecture de la Manche to formalise the previous information sharing arrangements and to set out the responsibilities of St Lo, States of Guernsey and States of Jersey in relation to the provision of Emergency Planning information during an emergency.

What notification Jersey would receive (nature and timing) if there was an incident which resulted in the release of nuclear material;

In the event of an emergency or accident at either Flamanville or Cap De La Hague special arrangements have been agreed between the Préfecture De La Manche, St Lo, the Emergency Planning Officer and States of Jersey Police to ensure accurate and timely information is passed to Jersey. To facilitate this, dedicated lines of communications have been established between the Préfecture De La Manche, Emergency Centre, St Lo and the States of Jersey Police Headquarters Control Room. These would be activated as part of the Préfecture general alert system if a critical nuclear incident were declared. These communications are tested and exercised regularly.

How the Island would deal with such an incident; and

The States of Jersey Emergency Plan for Incidents at Flamanville and Cap De La Hague on the Cotentin Peninsula, La Manche, France details how the Island would deal with such an incident.

Whether the Island has a stock of potassium iodide tablets?

The Island does not hold a stock of iodine for the general population. A review carried out by the UK Radiation Protection Division in 2007 estimated probability of a major incident at Flamanville having an impact on Jersey as one in every 34 million years.

The decision not to obtain iodine for the general population was based not only on this very low risk, but also on the fact that Jersey is much further away (40km) from the Flamanville site than the 10km distribution area within which protective (prophylactic) iodine would be recommended.

Even if Jersey were much closer to the site and within the 10km iodine distribution area, the use of iodine prophylaxis in the event of a nuclear release is complicated. Iodine only protects the thyroid gland against the effects of radioactive iodine, which is one of many isotopes that would be released in the event of a nuclear power station incident. Also, prophylactic iodine products have a very short shelf life, maximum of 4 years which would make regularly replacing an appropriate level of stock for an entire population very expensive.

These products are not free of risk and can cause health problems in some individuals, so should only be used when absolutely necessary.