

CIVIL NUCLEAR CONSTABULARY

Nuclear federation fights site policing cuts

REPORTS BY TOM BOVINGDON

POLICING at two of the UK's nuclear sites needs to be 'urgently revisited' over fears that officer numbers will be cut, the Civil Nuclear Police Federation has said.

Nigel Dennis, federation general secretary, said the organisation was 'concerned' the Civil Nuclear Constabulary officer presence in Capenhurst [in Cheshire] and Springfields [in Preston] may be reduced.

In a letter sent last Friday to David Kidney, parliamentary under-secretary for the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), Mr Dennis said: 'In the context of the level of [the terrorist] threat having been recently revised upwards to "severe", our view is that the decision of the future of CNC officers in providing security against threat at these two important sites needs to be urgently revisited.'

'The minister will be aware of the widespread concern in this federation and I suspect within the CNC



SEVERE THREAT: The IAEA provides security guidelines for nuclear sites

that security at Capenhurst and Springfields is to be further downgraded by the possible removal of officers.'

In a written parliamentary answer to the House of Commons on 26 January, Mr Kidney said the force's officers have 'not been routinely armed at Capenhurst and Springfields since January 2007'.

He added: 'Capenhurst and Springfields are category III nuclear

sites as defined by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and in the nuclear industry's security regulations. Security measures at each site meet or exceed guidelines approved by the IAEA. It is not usual for category III sites, with the exception of nuclear generating stations, to have an armed response present at them.'

However, Mr Dennis said the minister's comments gave 'an incomplete picture' of policing

arrangements at the site. He added: 'It suggests you are unaware that although officers are not routinely armed, their patrol vehicles are as a result of a previous decision.'

'The key point is that the CNC have immediate access to armed weapons in recognition of the very real threat.'

Mr Dennis told *Police Review* the letter was designed to 'reinforce' the importance of security at the sites while the DECC reviews arrangements at the sites.

A Civil Nuclear Constabulary spokesman said: 'A review of the requirement of its presence at the Capenhurst and Springfield sites is taking place and the constabulary has been invited to respond as one of the stakeholders involved.'

A DECC spokesman said: 'Operators of civil licensed sites are required by law to have security in place.'

Sir Chris Fox, chairman of the CNC's authority, said: 'It is important the DECC ensures levels of security are kept under continuous review.'

CNC budget set for another rise

BUDGETS have gone up for the second year running at the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, a public meeting heard last week.

At last Wednesday's (27 January) meeting of the constabulary's authority in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, it was revealed that the force's budget for 2010/11 is likely to increase.

Nigel Dennis, general secretary of the constabulary's federation, said the increase in budget was another 'good news story' for the force.

He said: 'There has also been an improvement in morale and a huge amount of work done on [officer] training.'

A spokesman for the authority told *Police Review* that the 2010/11 budget was still in the proposal stage. In 2009/10, the authority approved a revenue expenditure budget of £54.7 million, an increase of nearly 11 per cent on the budget of £51.8 million for 2008/09.

Richard Thompson, the constabulary's chief constable, told *Police Review*: 'We have secured increased levels of funding for the second year running.'

Force trying to claim cash it saves firms

FINANCIAL arrangements that prevent the Civil Nuclear Constabulary from keeping money it saves are to be reviewed, the force's chief constable has said.

Richard Thompson told *Police Review* he is looking at ways to change the way the constabulary is funded so that any savings can be diverted back into the force rather than to nuclear site licensees.

The constabulary currently receives funding from individual site licence companies and generates additional income by training international power station security staff.

At a meeting of the constabulary's police authority in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, last Wednesday (27 January), Mr Thompson said money saved at the Sellafield nuclear site in Cumbria could not currently be reinvested in the force as it went back to Sellafield Ltd, the company providing the original funding.

He said: 'Unless the money has been used, it cannot be spent. What happens is that there is no process to use elsewhere the money we have saved. If we take a hypothetical site and a hypothetical



RICHARD THOMPSON: Wants savings the CNC makes to go to the force

operating company, the company will be interested in clawing that money back.

'Now we understand the benefits of last year's [savings] we need to go away and work out what that means. In the future it might need to change. We would be given a lump sum of money [to divide between the sites].'

Mr Thompson told the meeting that savings at the Sellafield site, and increased efficiency at other sites, was because of closing some

site gates at certain times of day, occasionally reducing the number of officers manning gates and increasing on-site training.

He added: 'We need to improve from practice and we need to work closely with Sellafield to tackle the broader issue: what can we do with the money we have saved? Unless that money can be kept, you cannot spend it elsewhere.'

'The problem we have is that the money has to be sent back. It is complex.'