

NUKEWATCH

Convoy Movements Summary 2009

The log below is based principally on observations by Nukewatchers, but complemented by deduction as to the purpose of each convoy journey and the number of warheads carried.

Nukewatch considers that during the year at least three loaded convoys travelled between the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and the Coulport nuclear arms depot. Our best guess is that between four and eight nuclear warheads were returned to AWE for servicing and / or surveillance, and either one or two warheads were dispatched to Coulport. However, it must be stressed that this is an estimate and that convoy journeys may have taken place that Nukewatch was unable to monitor. The overall picture is similar to that of the last two years – a low level of activity representing the baseline necessary to allow the movement of nuclear weapons for maintenance and surveillance purposes.

New warhead carrier trucks are scheduled to enter into service in 2010 and during 2009 a number of exercises and evaluation runs with different types of potential new vehicles took place. At the end of 2008 / beginning of 2009 new Protected Escort Vehicles were brought into service to replace the Sprinter vans formerly used by the convoy commanders.

The final convoy of the year spent a period of time at AWE Burghfield at the same time as a Special Nuclear Materials convoy arrived at Burghfield following a journey from RAF Brize Norton. It is assumed that these two convoy movements are linked, although further details are not known. This is the first time that such a pattern of activity has been observed by Nukewatch.

More Nukewatchers needed

New Nukewatchers are always needed to check, monitor or track convoys. We are particularly keen to recruit regular watchers in the North of England. However, anyone travelling on a convoy route or near a base can help us by keeping a look-out. Vehicles can travel together as a convoy or individually and at night or during the day. If you see what might be a convoy or convoy vehicle please ring Nukewatch on one of the numbers below AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Try to give us a description of what you saw, the time and location, and the direction of travel of what you saw.

IF YOU SEE A CONVOY PLEASE RING ONE OF THESE NUKEWATCH NUMBERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

South: 0845 45 88 364

North: 0845 45 88 365

WHAT?

WHEN?

WHERE?

WHICH WAY?

NUKEWATCH

2009 Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) WARHEAD CONVOY LOG

Trip number	Date Out	Date In	Location	To	Load	No trucks	Route
	?	Mon 19.01.09	AWE Aldermaston	RNAD Coulport	Unladen	3	M6
1 Return Trident	? Sun 01.02.09	? Mon 02.02.09	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Loaded	3	
	Tues 03.02.10 - Wed 04.02.10		AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3 ¹	
Exercise?	Mon 07.07.09	?	AWE Burghfield	?	Unladen?	2	
	?	Fri 10.07.10	?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen?	2	
	?	Mon 21.09.10	AWE Aldermaston	RNAD Coulport	Unladen	3 ¹	
2 Return Trident	Thurs 01.10.09	Fri 02.10.09	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Loaded	3	M74, A1
	Thurs 08.10.09		AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3	
Exercise	?	Tues 20.10.09	?	RNAD Coulport	Unladen	3 ^{1,2}	
	Thurs 22.10.09	Fri 23.10.09	RNAD Coulport	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3 ^{2,3}	
	Mon 23.11.09	Thur 26.11.09	AWE Burghfield	?	?	2-3?	
		Mon 30.11.09	?	AWE Burghfield	?	2-3?	
1 Trident	Mon 07.12.09	Mon 07.12.09	AWE Burghfield	RNAD Coulport	Loaded?	2?	
3 Return Trident	?	Fri 11.12.09	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Loaded?	2?	
	Fri 11.12.09	Tues 15.12.09	AWE Burghfield ⁴	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	2?	

Notes:

- ¹ Vehicles travelled up independently and not in full convoy formation
- ² No TCHD trucks in convoy. Commercial hire trucks in convoy with escort. Likely to be driver evaluation / familiarisation with new vehicle types.
- ³ Left Coulport in convoy formation but had broken up into individual vehicles by the time it reached Oxford.
- ⁴ Stay at Burghfield co-incided with the arrival and departure of a SNM convoy from RAF Brize Norton.