

NUKEWATCH

www.nukewatch.org.uk

Warhead convoy movements summary 2010

The log below is based principally on observations by Nukewatchers, but complemented by deduction as to the purpose of each convoy journey and whether or not warheads were carried.

Nukewatch considers that during the year at least two loaded convoys travelled between the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and the Coulport nuclear arms depot. Our best guess is that in February / March between one and four nuclear warheads were dispatched to AWE for servicing and / or surveillance, and then returned 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. Convoy exercise activities are also thought to have taken place in January, June, October, and possibly August.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review, published in October, announced that the government intends to reduce the number of nuclear warheads deployed on Vanguard class submarines. An upturn in warhead convoy numbers may be observed over the next couple of years as warheads are withdrawn from service and dismantled.

New warhead carrier vehicles

This year the Ministry of Defence took delivery of replacement Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) Mark 3 vehicles to replace the current Foden TCHD Mark 2 warhead carriers and the ageing blue High Security Vehicles which are used to transport Special Nuclear Materials.

Following trials of a range of different vehicle types in 2009, the new Mark 3 vehicles, based on a Mercedes Actros tractor unit with a refurbished Mark 2 trailer, took to the road in the first full convoy road test journey from Burghfield to Coulport and back in July.

Special Nuclear Materials convoys

Nukewatch also observed movements of Special Nuclear Materials (SNM) convoys with High Security Vehicles between Aldermaston and RAF Brize Norton in June (Monday 14th), when radioactive materials were transported by air to the USA, and to and from Aldermaston in November (Wednesday 10th). On each occasion two separate SNM convoys travelled on the same day. Other SNM convoys which Nukewatch was unable to monitor would also have made journeys over the year.

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

Di:	0845 45 88 364	or	07880 557035
Jane:	0845 45 88 367	or	07778 267833
Roz and Mark:	0845 45 88 365	or	07972 096499

We need to know what you saw, when you saw it, where, and what direction the convoy vehicles were travelling in.

For more information please see the Nukewatch website at www.nukewatch.org.uk

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2010 Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) Warhead Convoy Log

Trip number	Date Out	Date In	From	To	Load	No trucks	Route
Exercise	?	Fri 22.01.10	?	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3 Foden ¹	
1 Trident	Wed 03.02.10	Thurs 04.02.10	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Loaded	3 Foden ²	M74
	Thurs 11.02.10		AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston?	Unladen	3 Foden	
	Wed 24.02.10		AWE Aldermaston?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	3 Foden	
1 Return Trident	Fri 26.02.10	Sat 27.02.10	AWE Burghfield	RNAD Coulport	Loaded	3 Foden	M6
	Wed 03.03.10	Thurs 04.03.10	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	3 Foden	M74
	Fri 05.03.10		AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3 Foden	
	?	Tues 22.06.10	?	AWE Burghfield	?	?	
	Tues 20.07.10		AWE Aldermaston?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	3 Mercedes	
Exercise	Wed 21.07.10	Thurs 22.07.10	AWE Burghfield	RNAD Coulport	Unladen	3 Mercedes	M6 / M74
	Sun 25.07.10	Mon 26.07.10	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	3 Mercedes	M9 / A1?
	Tues 27.07.10		AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston?	Unladen	3 Mercedes	
	?	Sun 22.08.10	?	RNAD Coulport	?	? ³	
Exercise	Tues 26.10.10	?	AWE Burghfield	?	Unladen	2-3 Mercedes	M6 ⁴
	?	Sat 30.10.10	?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	2-3 Mercedes	
Exercise	?	Sun 07.11.10	AWE Aldermaston?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	1 Foden 1 Mercedes	
	Tues 09.11.10	?	AWE Burghfield	?	Unladen	1 Foden 1 Mercedes	

Notes:

- ¹ No TCHD trucks in convoy. Commercial hire trucks in convoy with escort. Likely to be driver evaluation / familiarisation with new vehicle types.
- ² No information available on outward trip to Coulport, which was unobserved by Nukewatch.
- ³ Sighting reported by member of the public but not corroborated by Nukewatch.
- ⁴ Travelled at least as far as Weeton Camp, near Preston.