

ANGUS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE- 27 NOVEMBER 2003

MONITORING OF ENVIRONMENTAL RADIATION

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

ABSTRACT

Sampling and monitoring in connection with environmental radiation is undertaken on a regular basis by staff of the environmental health department. The report summarised and discusses the results for 2000 and 2001.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the committee note the contents of this report.

2. BACKGROUND

Angus Council has been monitoring background radiation for over ten years. This work was initiated by a consortium of local authorities nationwide, following the Chernobyl incident in 1986 the aim being to provide certifiable information on the levels of man-made radioactivity in the environment and collect data on base line levels for use in any future incident and also to indicate potential radiation doses to the public.

3. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Angus Council is among several Scottish Local Authorities that regularly submit samples of local foodstuffs, rainwater, dust, soil, grass, seawater and sediment for radiological analysis by Glasgow Scientific Services. In addition Angus Council also provide the results of our own external gamma radiation monitoring for comparison with other national readings.

Between January 2000 and December 2001, a total of 58 samples were submitted for isotopic analysis and 64 external gamma radiation readings were taken at 8 locations within Angus. Without exception all of the results from samples submitted by Angus Council were within acceptable limits and in the majority of cases were among the lowest found in Scotland. Similarly, the external gamma radiation monitoring results compared favourably with expected background levels for the UK.

A copy of the full report is available in the Members Lounge.

4. SPECIFIC ISSUES

Over the period in question 2 samples of leachate from Lohead Landfill, Forfar were taken and submitted for analysis. Both sample results showed contamination with Tritium, a radioactive isotope used in such common use items such as luminous dials in clocks and watches and in emergency signs. It was common practice for these items to be disposed of as normal industrial waste and hence the appearance of Tritium in landfill leachate. It is stressed that the levels of Tritium found in the leachate do not give any cause for concern on the grounds of harm to human health.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications related to this report.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS

There are no human rights issues as a result of this report.

7. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law and Administration, have been consulted on the contents of this report.

S R Heggie
Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.