

John Ainslie

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 June 2006 14:22
To: John Ainslie
Subject: PQ responses

John, how are you? We have had a number of responses back and I thought it might be time for you to have another thought about follow up questions? If you have time!!

Atomic Weapons Establishment

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies are being carried out on future warhead options by officials at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [78962]

Des Browne: There is no programme to develop a new UK nuclear warhead. As was stated in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review, we retain a minimum capability to design and manufacture a new warhead,

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should one be required. Work by officials is now underway to prepare for decisions on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent and also to keep options open in advance of these decisions. It remains the case that no decisions have yet been taken.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are for the construction of an additional tritium facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [76767]

Des Browne: There are currently no plans to construct an additional tritium facility at AWE. Essential refurbishment and replacement of existing facilities is planned as part of the site investment programme announced by my predecessor on 19 July 2005.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are for the construction of a new facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston to make highly enriched uranium warhead components. [76768]

Des Browne: A number of options are under consideration for ensuring we retain the requisite capability. No decisions have yet been taken. The capability to manufacture highly enriched uranium is required in order to maintain the existing Trident warhead throughout its intended in-service life and to provide material for naval propulsion.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the A91 building at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston. [76773]

Des Browne: Plans for building A91 have not yet been formulated.

Trident

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence where and how often the UK carries out tests to ensure the accuracy of Trident nuclear missiles. [79086]

Des Browne: The UK carries out unarmed Trident missile firings at the United States of America's Eastern Test Range after each submarine's build and Long Overhaul Period. The information collected includes accuracy data.

The following table shows the details of previous unarmed firings:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Vessel</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Number of unarmed missiles</i>
26 May 1994	HMS Vanguard	Prior to initial deployment	1
19 June 1994	HMS Vanguard	Prior to initial deployment	1
24 July 1995	HMS Victorious	Prior to initial deployment	1
22 August 1995	HMS Victorious	Prior to initial deployment	1
10 October 1997	HMS Vigilant	Prior to initial deployment	2
21 September 2000	HMS Vengeance	Prior to initial deployment	1
10 October 2005	HMS Vanguard	Post refit (Long Overhaul Period (Refuel))	1

The frequency of test firings is dependent on the Long Overhaul Period programme.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what components of the Trident missile system are (a) on loan or (b) have been purchased from the United States of America. [79087]

Des Browne: The UK has no Trident missile system components on loan from the US. The UK purchased the rights to 58 Trident missiles and removable missile components under the Polaris Sales Agreement (as amended for Trident). The warheads were procured separately by the UK.

