

(1999/C 370/090)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0591/99**by Nuala Ahern (V) to the Commission**

(12 March 1999)

Subject: Commission studies on radioactive waste management and nuclear safeguards

Will the Commission list each of the instances since 1995 when (a) United Kingdom and (b) Irish Government experts have contributed to Commission studies on (1) radioactive waste management and (2) nuclear safeguards and physical protection measures for plutonium? Will the Commission publish a list of the relevant studies in the Official Journal?

Answer given by Mr Papoutsis on behalf of the Commission

(3 May 1999)

With respect to radioactive waste management and during the period in question, British and Irish government experts, within the usual meaning of the term, have only been active on standing and ad hoc committees, alongside experts appointed by the other Member States. These committees have various roles such as programme management, contract evaluation, and assistance in drafting of reports on specific topics. They have not been involved in studies as such.

However, during this period the Commission has financed numerous studies on various aspects related to radioactive waste and remediation of contaminated areas. These studies have been performed by external contractors selected, in the main, following open calls for tender. Over 20 of these study contracts were awarded to British companies, and British companies were probably involved as subcontractors in many others. British companies and organisations have also been involved in more than 20 research contracts concerning radioactive waste management in the fourth research and technological development (RTD) framework programme. Some of these companies either had, or still have, a majority British government shareholding (e.g. British nuclear fuels Ltd. (BNFL), United Kingdom atomic energy authority (UKAEA)), or represent offices within the British civil service structure (e.g. National radiological protection board (NRPB)). It is not clear whether the contractors' staff in these cases should be regarded as government experts, and in any case a list of all such staff will probably run to several hundred names. However, the results of all study contracts following an open call procedure are available to the public, and reports are normally published in the EUR report series. A full list of titles and contracting companies can be provided if necessary.

Nuclear safeguards is performed by the Commission under Chapter VII of the Euratom Treaty, the implementation of which is defined in Commission Regulation (Euratom) no 3227/76 of 19 October 1976 concerning the application of the provisions on Euratom safeguards⁽¹⁾. National authorities or experts have not been requested to participate in Commission safeguards studies.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 363, 31.12.1976.

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WRITTEN QUESTION E-0592/99**by Nuala Ahern (V) to the Commission**

(12 March 1999)

Subject: Notification from the Japanese authorities of plans to send highly enriched uranium spent fuel to the US via EU ports

Have the Japanese authorities, since January 1998, sought permission, or otherwise notified the Commission of plans to send highly enriched uranium spent fuel to the United States via ports in the European Union?