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7 septembre 2016

NDA Responds To BBC Allegations About Sellafield Safety

6 Sep (NucNet) : A BBC documentary about the Sellafield nuclear site painted a negative picture of safety that "we do not recognise", the UK's Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Sellafield Ltd said in a joint statement today. The documentary, which was broadcast in the UK last night, alleged there were a number of "potentially lethal" safety flaws at the site including radioactive chemicals stored in plastic bottles that should only ever have been used as short-term storage. The documentary makers said they had found more than 2,000 bottles with the toxic materials still on site. A former senior manager at the site, speaking anonymously, said his biggest fear for the site was for one of the nuclear waste silos to go up in flames. He said : "If there is a fire there it could generate a plume of radiological waste that will go across western Europe." The NDA and Sellafield Ltd said in their statement : "Sellafield is safe, there is no question about that. Maintaining safety is the priority at Sellafield. Employees work around the clock every day to ensure that the site is safe today, tomorrow and in the future." They said it was disappointing that despite giving the BBC access to Sellafield and spending a significant amount of time explaining complex issues, the programme painted a negative picture of safety "that we do not recognise". The statement said : "Sellafield Ltd rightly operates in one of the most regulated industries in the world and current safety performance is excellent and improving and the workers are making great progress in cleaning up Europe's most complex nuclear site on behalf of the UK taxpayer." The NDA is responsible for the UK's civil public sector nuclear estate, encompassing 17 nuclear sites, their liabilities and assets. This includes Sellafield, which it says is its "largest, most complex site".. Sellafield Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the NDA and responsible for operations and deliverables at the site on behalf of the NDA.