

## **FUTURE STORAGE OF REDUNDANT SUBMARINES: MOD WANTS TO HEAR FROM THE PUBLIC**

15 November 2000

The Ministry of Defence is to canvas the direct views of the public to help identify the best options for future land storage of redundant nuclear submarines, Defence Minister Lewis Moonie announced today.

A MOD study concluded earlier this year that the current practice of storing submarines afloat at Devonport and Rosyth remained safe, but that the lack of alternative afloat sites meant that storing the radioactive components on land was the best option for the longer term.

Dr Moonie launched the latest phase of the study last May, and said that MOD would be seeking proposals from industry in order to identify the best storage method and site. He also announced that there would be a full and open consultation. Now, in order to ensure the public are involved from the outset, an additional round of consultation is to be held.

Dr Moonie said:

***"Taking into account the views of the public was always going to be a key part of our work, and we have been encouraging public comments from the start. Now we have decided to go further, by actively finding out what people think.***

***"We will carry out work to determine, for instance, how much the public would like to be involved in the study, and the criteria against which we should evaluate the storage options. Techniques for doing this work in the most effective manner are currently being explored with a number of universities. We expect the use of a Citizen's Advice Panel and focus groups to feature in this process."***

During the first period of consultation, due to be completed by the end of December, the public have already had the opportunity to make their comments to MOD. Their views will be passed to industry to help them produce their proposals. The results of this initial stage will be published early next year, after which the new phase of public consultation will start.

A third period of consultation will be undertaken in 2002, once a shortlist of proposals from industry has been drawn up. There will be a fourth consultation period in 2003 on the recommended storage method and site before a final decision is taken.