

# NUKEWATCH

[www.nukewatch.org.uk](http://www.nukewatch.org.uk)

## Warhead convoy movements summary 2013

The log below is based principally on observations by Nukewatchers, but complemented by deduction as to the purpose of each convoy journey and whether or not warheads were carried.

Nukewatch considers that during 2013 at least two loaded convoys travelled between the Coulport nuclear arms depot in Scotland and the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield in Berkshire. We estimate that between two and eight nuclear warheads were dispatched to AWE and between zero and eight warheads returned to Coulport. Our best guess is that four warheads were dispatched to AWE and two were returned to Coulport.

As with the last two years, there is a discrepancy in our observations between the numbers of loaded convoys transporting warheads from Coulport to the Atomic Weapons Establishment and the number of loaded return journeys to Coulport. A balance of two warheads (our best guess figure) appears to have been retained at AWE. This would be consistent with a programme for decommissioning around three warheads per year between 2011 and 2025 to bring the UK's total warhead stockpile down from around 225 warheads to around 180 warheads, as the government committed to in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (see <http://bit.ly/KMzCiD>). Sustained monitoring over further years will be needed to confirm whether a gradual annual reduction in warhead numbers is indeed taking place.

It must be stressed that this is an estimate and that convoy journeys will have taken place that Nukewatch was unable to monitor. The overall picture of convoy movements during the year represents a slightly lower level of activity than over the last year, but is consistent with general observations over the past three to four years. The level of convoy activity continues to remain consistent at the baseline necessary to allow the movement of nuclear weapons for maintenance and surveillance purposes, with a slow rate of return of warheads to AWE for decommissioning.

Convoy exercise activities are also thought to have taken place in March, May, and September.

## Special Nuclear Materials convoys

Nukewatch also observed movements of Special Nuclear Materials (SNM) convoys with High Security Vehicles during 2012/13. An SNM convoy was observed on the M40 on Wednesday 29 May, believed to be transporting highly enriched uranium pellets for submarine reactor fuel from AWE Aldermaston to Rolls-Royce Derby. Another convoy was observed at RNAD Coulport on Wednesday 16 October, believed to be travelling to collect warhead components from Coulport for return to AWE. Nukewatch also received an uncorroborated report of a sighting of an SNM convoy on the M1 near Milton Keynes on Wednesday 21 August. Further SNM convoys which Nukewatch was unable to monitor would also have made journeys over the year.

**IF YOU SEE A CONVOY PLEASE RING ONE OF THESE NUKEWATCH NUMBERS  
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:**

South: 0845 45 88 364

North: 0845 45 88 365

Mobile: 07796 226 488

Mobile: 07790 409 339

We need to know what you saw, when you saw it, where, and what direction the convoy vehicles were travelling in.

For more information please see the Nukewatch website at [www.nukewatch.org.uk](http://www.nukewatch.org.uk)

**NUKEWATCH**  
**2013 Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) Warhead Convoy Log**

Trip purpose	Date Out	Date In	From	To	Load	No trucks	Route
	Thurs 07.03.13	Thurs 07.03.13	AWE Aldermaston	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	4?	
Exercise	Mon 11.03.13	?	AWE Burghfield	?	Unladen	4?	M6
	Thurs 14.03.15?	Fri 15.03.13	?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	4?	M6
	Mon 18.03.13	Mon 18.03.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	4?	
	Thurs 09.05.13	Thurs 09.05.13	AWE Aldermaston	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	4	
Exercise	Tues 14.05.13	Tues 14.05.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Burghfield <sup>1</sup>	Unladen	4	M40
	Fri 17.05.13	Fri 17.05.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	4	
	Mon 22.07.13	Mon 22.07.13	AWE Aldermaston	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	3	
	Mon 22.07.13	Tues 23.07.13	AWE Burghfield	RNAD Coulport	Unladen	3	M6 / M8
2 Return Trident	Thurs 25.07.13	Fri 26.07.13	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield	Loaded	3	A68 / A1
	Tues 30.07.13	Tues 30.07.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3	
	Tues 17.09.13	Tues 17.09.13	AWE Aldermaston	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	4	
Exercise	Thurs 19.09.13	Thurs 14.06.12	AWE Burghfield	?	Unladen	4	
	Fri 20.09.13	Fri 20.09.13	?	AWE Burghfield	Unladen	4	M40 <sup>2</sup>
	Mon 23.09.13	Mon 23.09.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	4	
	?	?	AWE Aldermaston	AWE Burghfield <sup>3</sup>	Unladen	3?	
2 Trident up	Tues 11.11.13	Wed 12.11.13 ?	AWE Burghfield	RNAD Coulport <sup>3</sup>	Loaded	3?	
2 Return Trident	Thurs 21.11.13	Fri 22.11.13	RNAD Coulport	AWE Burghfield <sup>2</sup>	Loaded	3?	
	Mon 25.11.13	Mon 25.11.13	AWE Burghfield	AWE Aldermaston	Unladen	3?	

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> One day round trip returning to Burghfield.

<sup>2</sup> Sighting reported by member of the public.

<sup>3</sup> No information available on this trip, which was unobserved by Nukewatch.