



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Rt Hon Lord Hunt OBE
Minister of State for Energy
Security and Net Zero

**Department for Energy, Security
& Net Zero**

55 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HP

Bill Esterson MP
Chair of the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

3 March 2025

Dear Bill,

Management of Italian Nuclear Materials in the UK

I am writing to update you on the UK Government's efforts to conclude our historical nuclear material contracts with European counterparts.

In 2011, the UK held over 10 tonnes of European-owned civil separated plutonium resulting from historic nuclear reprocessing agreements. Since then, the UK Government has had an extant policy that foreign-owned plutonium in the UK could be transferred into ownership of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) in return for payment, subject to acceptable commercial terms for the UK.

In the years that have followed, the UK Government has concluded multiple ownership transfer deals with various European counterparts, including taking ownership of Dutch, Spanish, Swedish and German material based in the UK. These transactions have offered a cost-effective and beneficial arrangement for the UK.

I am pleased to share that the Government has announced today the conclusion of the final European ownership transfer, which has taken place with an Italian counterpart.

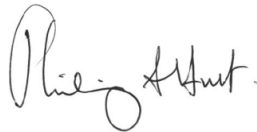
The NDA have received financial remuneration from the Italian counterpart in return for taking ownership of approximately 1.58 tonnes of civil separated plutonium. In addition, the NDA have received remuneration for taking ownership of approximately 700 tonnes of reprocessed uranium as part of the same deal. The revenue from the transactions is sufficient to cover the cost of the management of the plutonium and reprocessed uranium involved. Both nuclear materials are already stored at Sellafield, and as such do not result in an increase to the overall amount of plutonium or reprocessed uranium in the UK.

The UK has committed to publish annual figures for national holdings of civil plutonium and uranium at the end of each calendar year to improve transparency and public confidence. The most recently published data can be found at the following link: <https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/regulatory-reports/safeguards/annual-civil-plutonium-figures/2023-annual-figures-for-holdings-of-civil-unirradiated-plutonium/>. This data will be updated in due course to reflect the changes in ownership described above.

In January 2025, the Department also [announced](#) the decision to immobilise the UK-owned civil separated plutonium inventory at Sellafield.

This marks a significant milestone in the UK Government's management of nuclear materials in the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rt Hon Lord Hunt OBE'.

Rt Hon Lord Hunt OBE

Minister of State (Minister for Energy Security and Net Zero)