



**Ministry
of Defence**

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom
DSA-Enquiries@mod.uk

Ref: FOI2016/00123



02 February 2016

Dear

Thank you for your email of 30 November requesting the following information:

"How many times has the Defence Nuclear Safety Authority been notified of incidents regarding the Astute submarine programme? Ideally, I would like figures broken down annually over the last four years."

Following further communications on 2 December 2015 the request was clarified to be:

The number of incidents that Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator has been notified of regarding the Astute submarine programme, restricted to incidents relating to Nuclear Reactor Plant.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some information, in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found in the table below. The figures show the number of incidents reported both in build or in commission.:

Table 1 – Summary of Naval Reactor Plant Authorisee (NRPA) Event / Near Miss Reports for Astute Class Submarines from 6 Jan 12 to 5 Jan 16

Year	Number of events occurring on A Class reported to the NRPA	INES Scale	
		0	1
06 Jan 15- 06 Jan 16	21	21	0
06 Jan 14- 06 Jan 15	12	12	0
06 Jan 13- 06 Jan 14	20	20	0
06 Jan 12- 06 Jan 13	16	16	0
TOTAL	69	69	0

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to know that the figures show incidents reported as Naval Reactor Plant (NRP) Events or Near Misses as defined below:

- *“A NRP Event - “Any occurrence that has, or could have, led to a reduction in nuclear or radiation safety or that provides an opportunity for Operator Experience Feedback (OEF).”*
- *“A NRP Near Miss - Any occurrence that could have led to an NRP Event, or that provides an opportunity for OEF”*

The figures show events occurring between 06 Jan 12 and 05 Jan 16 that meet the reporting requirements occurring on or with an Astute Class Submarine. Events are categorised using the International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES). The Naval Reactor Plant Authorisee requires that all relevant Events and Near Misses (as defined above) are recorded, reported, investigated and assessed. The action taken by DNSR in response to a reported event varies depending on the level of severity. All of these events have been assigned an INES level of 0, meaning Below Scale / No Safety Significance, therefore no further action was taken.

No distinction has been made as to whether the 'Event' occurred onboard a nuclear submarine, within a Shore Based Facility, or on an interfacing system, structure or component linking the submarine and the Shore Based Facility.

This number covers NRP events for Astute Class Submarines that have occurred either in build or in commission. As the Astute Class is still being constructed the number of boats either in build or in commission is increasing, with a subsequent increase in the related activities and operations.

You stated in your clarification email of 2 December that you would like to be provided with the number of all Health & Safety (H&S) incidents if possible. In my letter dated 23 December I advised that H&S incidents are not reported to the DNSR. As your question specifically asks for the number of times the DNSR has been notified of incidents regarding Astute submarines, reported H&S incidents fall outside the scope of this request. Therefore, I would suggest you may wish to submit a new FOI request to ask how many H&S incidents regarding the Astute submarine programme have been reported to the MOD.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

DSA Secretariat