



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

# Annual Report for 2015 on the operation of the Chemical Weapons Act 1996



July 2016

# ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015 ON THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS ACT 1996

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 33 of the  
Chemical Weapons Act 1996

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## Executive summary

Section 33 of the Chemical Weapons Act 1996 requires the Secretary of State to prepare, each calendar year, a report on the operation of the Act, and to lay a copy before each House of Parliament. This report provides information relating to provisions in the Act that ensure the effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

The CWC UK National Authority (UKNA), based in DECC, is responsible for implementing the Act in the UK, its Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories. The Act places legal requirements on all companies, universities, other entities and individuals that work with certain toxic chemicals to declare information required under the CWC, and to provide access to sites for verification of declarations by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In addition, the Act requires anyone wishing to produce, possess or use certain very toxic chemicals to obtain a licence to do so.

The UKNA liaises with approximately 400 organisations in the UK each year to coordinate information on chemical activities required under the Act. It also works closely with the OPCW, based in The Hague, Netherlands and collaborates with other Government departments in the development of UK policy on chemical-related non-proliferation issues.

# CWC Declarations

The CWC has three Schedules, each with different levels of control. Schedule 1 includes nerve and blister agents and, as such, is the most controlled, particularly as these chemicals have very few peaceful uses. The chemicals listed in Schedules 2 and 3 are subject to differing verification requirements and, especially in the case of Schedule 3, are often produced in large quantities for industrial purposes.

The CWC requires States Parties to submit to the OPCW a range of annual declarations covering activities involving chemicals specified in these three Schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1 chemicals - production, acquisition, consumption, storage, import and export
- Schedule 2 chemicals - production, processing, consumption, import and export
- Schedule 3 chemicals - production, import and export

The declarations are broken down by Schedule and report activities for the past calendar year (known as the Annual Past Declaration (APD)) and anticipated activities for the next calendar year (the Annual Anticipated Declaration (AAD)). Since 2004, additional information for Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 chemicals below the declaration threshold has been provided in an aggregated form known as the Aggregate National Data declaration (AND). The UK does not have a de-minimis declaration threshold for Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 chemicals. Information is also provided on the large-scale production of a separate category of chemicals referred to in the Convention as Discrete Organic Chemicals (DOCs).

Declarations draw on information submitted by UK industry, academic and government organisations, and are provided to the OPCW according to the following timetable:

Declaration	Timing
<b>Annual Past Declaration covering Schedule 1, 2 and 3 chemicals, including Aggregate National Data and Discrete Organic Chemicals</b>	No more than 90 days after the end of the calendar year
<b>Annual Anticipated Declaration for Schedule 1 chemicals</b>	No less than 90 days before the beginning of the calendar year
<b>Annual Anticipated Declaration for Schedule 2 and 3 chemicals</b>	No less than 60 days before the beginning of the calendar year

The CWC also requires States Parties to provide information on any old chemical weapons (OCWs) found or destroyed on their territories (including a plan for future destruction) according to the following timetable:

Declaration	Timing
<b>Annual Plan for destruction</b>	No less than 60 days before the end of the calendar year
<b>Annual Report on destruction</b>	No more than 60 days after the end of the calendar year
<b>Ad Hoc Declarations of new finds</b>	Within 180 days of discovery

Two further reports are also required annually: on activities at former chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) approved by the OPCW for conversion for purposes not prohibited under the CWC; and on defence programmes for protection against chemical weapons.

The UK's APD for 2014 was submitted to the OPCW on 4 March 2015. In addition to activities involving scheduled chemicals and DOCs, the declaration reported on activities at the three converted former CWPFs at Nancekuke (Cornwall), Randle (Cheshire) and Rhydymwyn (North Wales), all of which ceased the production and storage of chemical weapons in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Information on the UK's chemical defence programme in 2014 was also provided.

In 2012, the OPCW passed a decision on continued verification at converted CWPFs ten years after their conversion. The decision stipulates that each facility will receive at least one further inspection after the ten-year period and then be subject to monitoring by the OPCW for an additional period of five years. All three of the UK's former CWPFs have received inspections by the OPCW and are monitored by the OPCW through the submission of annual reports on their activities. If there are no changes to the activities at these sites, then Nancekuke and Randle will both cease to be monitored by the OPCW in 2018, and Rhydymwyn will cease in 2019.

The UK's AAD for 2016 for Schedule 1 facilities was submitted to the OPCW on 28 August 2015, and the AAD for Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 sites was submitted on 23 September 2015.

For OCWs, the UK submitted a report on the annual inventory and completed destruction during 2014 on 18 February 2015. Three declarations of new finds of OCWs in 2015 were also reported to the OPCW in accordance with agreed procedures. Destruction of OCWs was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to an upgrade to the UK's OCW storage and

destruction facility at the Defence Science & Technology Laboratory at Porton Down. Destruction recommenced in 2015 following completion of the upgrade.

The numbers of UK organisations making APDs in each category in each year since the CWC entered into force is:

	Schedule 1	Schedule 2	Schedule 3	DOCs	AND
1997	2	9	11	132	n/a
1998	2	9	14	153	n/a
1999	2	8	12	151	n/a
2000	2	7	12	142	n/a
2001	2	10	11	140	n/a
2002	2	10	11	141	n/a
2003	2	10	12	131	n/a
2004	2	11	12	142	281
2005	2	14	10	134	279
2006	2	14	10	134	285
2007	2	12	7	125	256
2008	2	12	7	111	200
2009	2	12	7	111	199
2010	1	14	5	106	193
2011	1	17	5	98	253
2012	1	18	5	100	289
2013	1	19	5	93	291
2014	1	19	6	91	287
2015	1	18	6	91	287

Since 2010, the UKNA has operated a CWC Declarations Database, a secure online system which allows organisations making CWC declarations to prepare and submit them to the UKNA electronically online. The entire end-to-end declaration process is fully electronic, so as soon as a declaration is submitted by an organisation, it is immediately received by the UKNA. The UKNA then submits the UK's CWC declarations to the OPCW via the OPCW's Secure Information Exchange (SIX) system, which is encrypted when sent.

As well as being a much quicker and more secure process than the paper-based system that it replaced, the online system has a number of other advantages such as:

- a simple self-registration process to set up an online account
- site and plant information is pre-filled on subsequent declarations so that organisations only need to enter details of their chemical activities and sources
- declarations are electronically validated so that missing data or input errors need to be corrected before they can be submitted.
- organisations are able to view their previous declarations online
- declarations are checked by the UKNA on their receipt and any changes or modifications can be quickly made online in cooperation with the UKNA and the declarer

Since its launch, the CWC Declarations Database has continued to significantly improve the efficiency of the UK's CWC declaration process and the timely submission of declarations. Guidance and registration information for the database is available from the following link or by contacting the UKNA <https://itportal.decc.gov.uk/cwc>

In 2012, the OPCW initiated a Secure Information Exchange (SIX) project with the aim of establishing an end-to-end solution for the secure online exchange of information between States Parties and the OPCW, particularly the submission of annual CWC declarations. This was developed and tested in 2013 and officially made available to all States Parties in July 2014. The UKNA has made all the necessary adaptations to its IT systems and is fully utilising the SIX system which has helped to further streamline the UK's declaration process.



## CWC Inspections

Each year, the OPCW undertakes a number of routine initial and repeat inspections of selected declared sites to verify the declarations that are submitted by States Parties. The verification process serves as a confidence-building measure that each and every State Party is meeting its obligations under the Convention, and is intended to have a deterrent effect on any intention to contravene the Convention's provisions.

The UK received a total of ten routine inspections in 2015, predominantly at industrial facilities. Seven were received at sites producing DOC chemicals, one at the UK's Single Small Scale Facility (SSSF) for the production of Schedule 1 chemicals and one at the UK's OCW storage and destruction facility, both located at the Defence Science & Technology Laboratory at Porton Down. In addition, the UK received a final inspection to verify the complete destruction of Syrian chemicals that were received in 2014, as detailed in last year's report.

All the sites were acknowledged by the OPCW to have provided first-class co-operation and all inspections were completed without incident or unresolved issues. The number of OPCW inspections undertaken in the UK, by category, since the CWC entered into force is shown on the table overleaf.

Year	Schedule 1	Schedule 2	Schedule 3	DOCs	CWPF	OCW
1997	2	0	0	0	8	2
1998	1	4	1	0	5	1
1999	1	4	0	0	3	1
2000	2	0	1	0	3	1
2001	2	2	1	0	0	0
2002	1	2	2	0	1	1
2003	1	2	0	1	1	1
2004	0	2	0	4	0	1
2005	2	1	1	1	2	1
2006	1	5	0	3	1	1
2007	2	1	0	6	0	1
2008	0	1	0	5	0	1
2009	0	1	0	4	1	1
2010	1	2	0	5	1	1
2011	0	3	1	4	0	1
2012	0	3	1	6	1	1
2013	1	2	0	3	2	1
2014	0	2	0	4	1	1
2015	1	0	0	7	0	1

## Licensing and Trade Controls

The Act contains provisions to control Schedule 1 chemical production, possession and use through the issue of licences. These controls, together with separate import and export licensing requirements implemented under the Import of Goods (Control) Order 1954 and the Export Control Act 2002 respectively, aim to ensure that quantities of Schedule 1 chemicals acquired or possessed by the UK do not exceed the one tonne ceiling specified in the CWC; that the chemicals are used only for purposes not prohibited by the CWC; and that the CWC's conditions on transfers are met. Licence holders are required to report annual production and usage and any changes of circumstance to the UKNA.

An Open General Licence permits those registered under it to produce, possess or use an aggregate total of five grammes or less of any Schedule 1 chemical for pharmaceutical, medical or research purposes in any calendar year. Fourteen organisations operated under the Open General Licence during 2015.

An Individual Production, or Possession and Use, Licence is required to produce, or possess or use, more than five grammes of a Schedule 1 chemical. Two Individual Production Licences and eleven Individual Possession and Use Licences were issued for 2015.

# Contacts

For further information on the CWC and associated import licensing regulations, please contact:

The Chemical Weapons Convention UK National Authority  
Department of Energy and Climate Change  
Area A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
3 Whitehall Place  
London  
SW1A 2AW

Tel: 0300 068 5939 / 5925  
E-mail: [cwcna@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cwcna@decc.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/countering-weapons-proliferation/supporting-pages/the-chemical-weapons-convention>

A list of scheduled chemicals can be found on the OPCW website:

[www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/annex-on-chemicals/b-schedules-of-chemicals/](http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/annex-on-chemicals/b-schedules-of-chemicals/)

The OPCW's homepage can be found at: [www.opcw.org](http://www.opcw.org)

For information on export licensing regulations, please contact:

ECO  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
3rd Floor  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Tel: 0207 215 4594  
E-mail: [eco.help@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:eco.help@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.gov.uk/about-the-export-control-organisation](http://www.gov.uk/about-the-export-control-organisation)

# Glossary of Terms

- AAD** Annual Anticipated Declaration. Required to be submitted by anyone who anticipates, in the next calendar year, producing any Schedule 1 and/or 3 chemicals, and/or producing, processing and/or consuming any Schedule 2 chemicals, above certain quantities.
- AND** Aggregate National Data. Required to be submitted by anyone who, in the previous calendar year, produced, processed, consumed, imported and/or exported any Schedule 2 chemicals and anyone who produced, imported and/or exported any Schedule 3 chemicals, and whose activities fall below those quantities requiring APDs and AADs to be submitted.
- APD** Annual Past Declaration. Required to be submitted by anyone who, in the previous calendar year, produced any Schedule 1 and/or 3 chemicals and/or unscheduled Discrete Organic Chemicals (DOCs), and/or produced, processed and/or consumed any Schedule 2 chemicals, above certain quantities.
- CWC** Chemical Weapons Convention. The international treaty which aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties.
- CWPF** Chemical Weapon Production Facility. Any equipment, including any building housing such equipment that was designed, constructed or used at any time since 1 January 1946 for the production of a chemical weapon as defined by the Convention.
- DOC** Discrete Organic Chemical. Any chemical belonging to the classification of chemical compounds consisting of all compounds of carbons except for its oxides, sulphides and metal carbonates. Although DOCs are not included in the schedules, plant sites producing DOCs are subject to verification if they produce more than 200 tonnes annually (or 30 tonnes if they contain the elements phosphorus, sulphur or fluorine).
- OCW** Old Chemical Weapons. Chemical weapons produced before 1925 or, in the period between 1925 and 1946 that have deteriorated to such an extent that they can no longer be used as chemical weapons.

**OPCW** Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention with the mandate to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention.



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