

the full impact of a deliberate commercial aircraft crash and the fire that would ensue would be on the HAL facility."

He said BNFL had re-examined its safety arrangements and was satisfied that storage facilities would remain intact.

"Our emergency arrangements would work to mitigate the offsite impact of any radiological release that might result from such an attack," said Mr Clarke.

Sabotage threat

Dr Thompson also claims Sellafield is vulnerable to sabotage of the cooling equipment which keeps the material stable.

One scenario could see a large-scale release of radioactive waste into the Irish Sea, making fishing waters in Western Scotland unusable.

But his concerns were dismissed as unfounded by BNFL.

The Ministry of Defence is understood to have plans in place to deal with terrorist action at Sellafield.

It has declined to comment on security matters.

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