

## **James Fisher Nuclear wins world's deepest nuclear clean-up job at Dounreay**

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Building on its extensive track record in providing remote handling systems at Sellafield and Magnox, James Fisher Nuclear (JFN) has successfully been awarded a contract to assist with the retrieval and processing of radioactive waste from the Dounreay Shaft and wet silo, the world's deepest nuclear clean-up job.

As an integral part of JFN's planned diversification beyond Sellafield, the company will supply a suite of remote handling equipment to support the retrieval of miscellaneous waste materials from the Dounreay shaft and silo facilities. This multi-million pound contract will be delivered over a two year period and will involve the construction of a significant test facility in the James Fisher Nuclear Rig Hall located in Egremont (West Cumbria), on which to undertake inactive testing and operator training, prior to the delivery of the equipment to the Dounreay site.

Combining proven technology with robust design and safety considerations, the main mechanism for retrieval will be a hydraulic grab deployed from an Electric Overhead Travelling (EOT) crane located in a new facility above the silo. Potentially the first of a number of contracts due to be placed by Dounreay relating to the decommissioning of the 'high hazard' shaft and silo facilities, the safe retrieval of the waste from both these facilities, its repackaging and the clean-up and closure of the underground facilities is one of the most important and challenging tasks in the site's clean-up programme.

Some of the most hazardous radioactive waste from Britain's abandoned fast reactor experiment has lain submerged in water for 50 years in the 65-metre deep vertical shaft beneath Dounreay. The Dounreay wet silo is a sub-surface watertight two-compartment reinforced concrete tank. Each compartment is approximately 8.5m long, 4.9m wide and 10.5m deep, with retrieval of waste from the silo requiring remotely operated systems to work in a difficult and hostile environment.

Dr Paul Read, Managing Director at James Fisher Nuclear, says: "We have an extensive track record in providing remote handling systems at Sellafield and Magnox and this contract represents 'a first' for the deployment of our capability at Dounreay. Our specialised remote handling skills are directly applicable to the challenges that the Dounreay site faces. We're keen to get started and support Dounreay in the next step of its decommissioning programme".

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**Notes to editors:**

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