



7 February 2011

On 2 February 2011 the Scottish Government issued a press release <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2011/02/04155059> on the relocation of UK Continental Shelf cores from Edinburgh to Keyworth. BGS's responses to the issues raised in this press release are presented below.

1. Concerns over the integrity of the cores

These concerns have been raised by stakeholders in letters to BGS and at previous face to face meetings between BGS and stakeholders in Edinburgh, Keyworth and London. In order to address these concerns an independently chaired Core Transfer Advisory Group was set up, including representatives from industry, academia and DECC. This expert group developed a methodology for core transfer that was made available for public consultation through the BGS website in late 2010. A total of 11 responses were received. These responses, and BGS's replies to them, are published on the BGS website at: http://www.bgs.ac.uk/collections/gilmerton_relocation.html.

The Core Transfer Advisory Group concluded in a written response to BGS (also available from the same web page) that 'As long as the procedural, monitoring and quality-assurance aspects of the methodology are followed and adequately resourced during the move, we are happy that any risks to the collections will be at acceptable levels'.

2. Engagement with stakeholders

BGS has met with stakeholders on several occasions to discuss concerns over the relocation exercise. BGS responded to concerns over the business model and the integrity of the cores by implementing the actions described above. Furthermore, BGS undertook to create and publish online, for the first time, a digital image library of all the cores.

Stakeholders also expressed concerns over the potential impacts of the relocation on teaching in Scottish universities. BGS has responded by creating a dedicated core inspection facility at its Edinburgh offices. It is expected that this facility, complete with core collections requested by the Scottish universities, will become available in the coming months.

Through the above actions the BGS has fully met, indeed exceeded, the obligations it undertook during previous meetings with concerned stakeholders.

3. Concerns over the business case

Full details of the complete business case have been available on the BGS website for some time – see http://www.bgs.ac.uk/collections/gilmerton_relocation.html

The business case was also scrutinised in detail by The National Audit Office in early 2010, who found no irregularities or cause for concern over the figures.

