

Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0052264

Permit being assessed: BL7108IM.

For: Port Talbot Steel Works , **held by:** Tata Steel UK Limited

At: Tata Steel Strip Products UK , PORT TALBOT, PORT TALBOT, WEST GLAMORGAN, SA13 2NG.

Type of assessment: Site Inspection,

Reason: Routine.

On: 11/06/2026 between 09:00 and 13:45.

Parts of permit assessed: See Section 4.

NRW Lead Officer: Benjamin Taylor, accompanied by Kirsty Thomas.

Report sent to: Head of Environment, Tata Steel UK Limited, on 10/07/2026.

1. Summary of our findings (full details in section 4)

Part of permitted activity assessed (compliance criteria)	Assessment result	Permit condition
IR3A(1) - Installations - Emissions and monitoring - Emissions to water	C3 Minor	Permit condition 3.1.2.
IR3A(1) - Installations - Emissions and monitoring - Emissions to water	C3 Minor	Permit condition 3.1.2.
IR3A(1) - Installations - Emissions and monitoring - Emissions to water	C3 Minor	Permit condition 3.1.2.
IR3B - Installations - Emissions and monitoring - Emissions of substances not controlled by emission limits	C3 Minor	3.2.1

Result types are explained in more detail in the 'Important Information' section below.

Total non-compliances recorded	Total non-compliance score
4	16

How we use the non-compliance score to calculate your annual fee is explained in the 'Important Information' section below.

2. What action is required?

Criteria	Action needed	Complete by
IR3A(1)	Once TSUK have concluded their investigations, they are to submit this information to NRW in the form of a Schedule 5:	28/07/2026

Criteria	Action needed	Complete by
	Part B Notification without delay - Including any available information on volumes of firewater discharged via W1 and W3 and environmental impact conclusions.	
IR3A(1)	As action above.	28/07/2026
IR3A(1)	As action above.	28/07/2026
IR3B	Once TSUK have concluded their investigations, they are to submit this information to NRW in the form of a Schedule 5: Part B Notification without delay	28/07/2026

Compliance criteria codes are listed in the 'Important information' section below.

3. What will happen next?

Any non-compliance we have identified and recorded on this form is an offence. It can result in criminal prosecution and/or suspension or revocation of your permit.

You are non-compliant with your permit.

We are currently considering taking enforcement action against you for the non-compliance recorded above. We will contact you in due course.

4. Details of our assessment

Introduction

This Compliance Assessment Report (CAR) is regarding the fire incident which occurred within the Port Talbot Steelworks on the 3rd and 4th of June 2026. The Site is managed by Tata Steel (UK) Ltd (TSUK) under permit number EPR/BL7108IM.

This CAR also covers the subsequent Site Inspection which was undertaken by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on the 11th of June 2026.

Scope

This pre-arranged visit, conducted alongside an HSE-led inspection, provided a follow-up to the incident, improving understanding of the fire, firewater management, and any ongoing environmental risks.

Additionally, the following documents submitted by TSUK have been reviewed as part of this CAR:

- *UKLT Regulator Visit 11th June 2026 Pickle Line Incident*
- *NRW Request for Information 110626*
- *ABO Results 020626 to 140626*

- *Email responses received on the 8th of June 2026.*
- *Schedule 5 Notifications:*
 - *UR_26_01A*
 - *S5N_26_06A*
 - *S5N_26_07A*
 - *S5N_26_08A*
 - *S5N_26_09A*

Fire Incident Summary

Initial

NRW was made aware of the incident by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) on the evening of 3rd of June 2026.

As part of the initial response, NRW attended TSUK's Silver Command Centre. It was confirmed, a fire was active at the pickle line which is located within the eastern region of the Cold Rolling Mill (CRM), further details were provided on TSUK's proposed firewater management arrangements by their onsite representatives. It was anticipated that the Operator would have sufficient capacity within its effluent infrastructure to contain both the contaminated firewater runoff and transferred Pickling Acid. However, due to uncertainty surrounding the potential volumes generated by the FRS, there was a potential for discharge via W1 – Long Sea Outfall should the drainage infrastructure become overwhelmed.

NRW were unable to access the area at the time and the area remains limited due to safety concerns. The root cause of the incident is yet to be determined.

Schedule 5: Notification Summary

On the 8th of June 2026, TSUK submitted four Schedule 5 notifications relating to the fire incident. These comprised one notification covering the fire and associated uncontrolled release, together with three notifications relating to subsequent exceedances of permit emission limit values (ELVs). A summary of the notifications is provided below.

- UR_26_01A – Fire Incident
- S5N_26_06A – Iron at W1 Outfall
- S5N_26_07A – Total Suspended Solids at W3 Outfall
- S5N_26_08A – Oil at W3 Outfall

Additionally, in the aftermath of the incident and TSUK's initial response, a further Schedule 5: Notification was submitted on the 15th of June 2026 for the following exceedance of permitted ELV:

- S5N_26_09A – Iron at W1 Outfall

NRW's compliance assessment of these exceedances is captured further on in this report.

Post Incident Site Inspection – 11th of June 2026

NRW Officers attended Site with HSE Inspectors at 09:30, and were met with key representatives of TSUK who are involved with the management of the incident.

The key details from the visit are summarised below:

- TSUK confirmed that the incident is unrelated to the demolition of the Coke Oven Gas Holding Tank, which coincidentally had been carried out earlier that day (3rd of June).
- TSUK provided a chronological timeline on the incident (see *UKLT Regulator Visit 11th June 2026 Pickle Line Incident*). Key points below:
 - Fire confirmed to originate from the Rinse Tanks (containing water) associated with the Pickling Line.
 - The plants deluge systems activated 7 minutes following the fire, however these systems were unable to completely extinguish the flames.
 - TSUK isolated all major services to the CRM (i.e. natural gas, oxygen, electricity, etc) in an effort to mitigate the fire.
 - The fire was initially contained by FRS and TSUK's deluge systems however, it then extended via the roof structures and was consequently exacerbated by wind ingress resulting in it spreading rapidly.
 - All staff were safely evacuated.
- Environmental Update:
 - Fire damaged resulted in a loss of containment from the Pickle Acid Tanks, these are a series of four tanks each with a concentration ranging from 14% down to 1% Hydrochloric Acid.
 - TSUK confirmed that whilst the majority of the Hydrochloric Acid was contained within the building, a quantity did enter the drainage network via gravity.
 - The loss led to a drop in pH of effluent within the drainage infrastructure. TSUK outlined the importance of pH control in the removal of Iron and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) from the discharge.
 - TSUK consider that their internal actions limited environmental impact,

however, there were exceedances of emissions limits at points W1 and W3 as per the Schedule 5 Notifications provided.

- NRW requested a more detailed environmental impact of the water emissions, which was provided by TSUK on the 15th of June 2026. The details and compliance assessment of the emissions to water is discussed within the Section below.
- NRW and HSE Officers attended the restricted area surrounding the Pickle Line and observed the internal fire damage from the entrance of Bay 8.

TSUK Firewater Management Update – Post Incident

At the request of NRW, TSUK provided additional information regarding their firewater management during the incident, including monitoring data from their W3 – Abbey Beach Outfall (ABO) Discharge Point. The key contents of these submissions (*NRW Request for Information 110626 & ABO Results 020626 to 140626*) are summarised below:

- TSUK confirmed that they adopted a revised approach from what was initially communicated to NRW, instead commissioning Vacuum Tankers to transfer contaminated water from the CRP to the Deep Drain Sump.
- The Deep Drain was diverted to the East Nautilus to contain and neutralise the contaminated water.
- TSUK initiated hourly monitoring of the LSO, Sump 3, and the Deep Drain.
- Due to significant volumes entering the Deep Drain, some contaminated water overflowed into the stormwater drainage system and was discharged via W3 – Abbey Beach Outfall (ABO) (see permit exceedance section below).
- At the time of the initial firewater management response, when Sump 2 was to be utilised, no interaction with W3 was anticipated. As a result, NRW was not made aware of this potential emission risk during the initial response. Ongoing communications from TSUK during such incidents should they occur are expected.
- Due to power isolation at the CRM, the Cold Mill Effluent Treatment Plant (CMETP) was non-operational, creating challenges for neutralising the Pickle Line Basement Tanks. NRW understands that TSUK prioritised reinstating this asset, which returned to operation on the 9th of June 2026.
- All effluent analytes were brought back under control and within permitted limits by the 15th of June 2026.
- NRW were informed during the visit that the East Nautilus was holding contaminated firewater (pH ~3), and TSUK were yet to develop a proposal for its safe removal.

- **Note:** TSUK have since confirmed to NRW that the East Nautilus has been fully drained and that cleaning operations for the internal surfacing was still ongoing. The acidified firewater contained has been treated and discharged accordingly via W1. NRW has received no Schedule 5: Notifications to suggest there has been any permit exceedances arising from these activities.
- *ABO Results 020626* demonstrates that TSUK implemented enhanced monitoring between the 4th & 9th of June 2026. *Schedule 3: Table S3.8* requires TSUK to collect a 24 average sample on a weekly basis (when a flow is present).

Compliance Assessment - Emissions to Water

On the 8th of June 2026, TSUK submitted a Schedule 5: Notification (*UR_26_01A*) to formally notify NRW of the fire incident, this was in accordance with permit condition 4.3.2 of the EPR permit. Prior to submission of the Schedule 5: Notification, TSUK notified NRW of the fire incident via email in the early hours of the 4th of June 2026.

Additionally, in the aftermath of the fire incident, TSUK submitted Schedule 5: Notifications to cover the following four exceedances of permitted ELVs (specified within *Schedule 3: Table S3.8*):

Determinand	Date	Monitoring Location	Emission Limit Value (ELV)	Measured Value	Schedule 5: Notification Reference
Iron	Calendar week 23: 31/05/26 – 06/06/26	W1 Long Sea Outfall	5mg/l	16.17mg/l	S5N_26_06A
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	04/06/2026	W3 Abbey Beach Outfall	200mg/l	221.78mg/l	S5N_26_07A
Oil	04/06/2026	W3 Abbey Beach Outfall	20mg/l	27.54mg/l	S5N_26_08A
Iron	Calendar week 24: 07/06/26 – 13/06/26	W1 Long Sea Outfall	5mg/l	11.40mg/l	S5N_26_09A

Table 1: List of permitted ELV exceedances that are presumed to be associated with the pickle line fire incident

TSUK has yet to submit a detailed root cause for the above exceedances to NRW, with the submitted Schedule 5 Notifications simply stating that “*investigations are currently*

ongoing.” NRW will further assess root cause following the completion of TSUK investigation and submission of the associated Schedule 5 Notification Part B.

Compliance:

Permit condition 3.1.2 below stipulates:

‘The limits given in schedule 3 shall not be exceeded.’

TSUK failed to adhere to the permitted limits that are associated with emissions to controlled waters for W1 and W3. This is a contravention of permit condition 3.1.2, and consequently a non-compliance score of C3 has been allocated against compliance criterion IR3A(1) – Emissions to water for each of the following:

- Iron exceedances at W1 in Calendar Week 23 & 24. .
 - In accordance with NRW’s scoring guidelines, scores associated with iron beaches have been consolidated into a singular non-compliance score.
- Oil exceedance at W3 on the 4th of June 2026.
- TSS exceedance at W3 on the 4th of June 2026.

Action:

Once TSUK have concluded their investigations, they are to submit this information to NRW in the form of a Schedule 5: Part B Notification without delay - Including any available information on volumes of firewater discharged via W1 and W3 and environmental impact conclusions.

Further assessment of additional information provided will be undertaken as required.

Compliance Assessment - Emissions to air

Unauthorised emissions to air occurred due to smoke being released during the fire incident. These emissions had the potential to cause pollution.

Compliance:

Permit condition 3.2.1 states:

"Emissions of substances not controlled by emission limits (excluding odour) shall not cause pollution...."

The unauthorised emissions to air is a contravention of permit condition 3.2.1 and consequently a non-compliance score of C3 has been allocated against compliance criterion IR3B.

TSUK is investigating the cause of the fire and must submit their investigation findings as

per the action above.

If you have any queries about this report, or to discuss completion of any actions, please contact the NRW Officer named above.

Important information

Legal status of this report

Your permit is issued to you under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. You have a responsibility to comply with the conditions of your permit and prevent pollution/harm of the environment. You must also ensure that you comply with any other relevant legislation that may apply to your site's operations.

This report explains the findings of our assessment and any action you are required to take. We categorise non-compliance using our guidance for assessing non-compliance at regulated sites.

When we find potential non-compliance/s we will normally give you advice on how to maintain compliance.

To correct non-compliance, we may:

- require you to take specific actions
- issue a notice
- review the conditions of your permit.

Any advice and guidance we give will be without prejudice to any other enforcement response that we consider may be required.

Assessment results and non-compliance categories (used in section 1):

Assessment result	Description
Assessed (A)	Assessed or assessed in part, no evidence of non-compliance found
Action only (X)	Action required for the permit condition assessed to avoid non-compliance. No non-compliance scored at this time
Ongoing (O)	Ongoing non-compliance, not scored

Non-compliance category	Description	Score
C1 Major	Potential to have a major, serious, persistent and/or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	60
C2 Significant	Potential to have a significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	31
C3 Minor	Potential to have a minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	4
C4 No environmental impact	Non-compliance at a regulated site that cannot foreseeably have any impact on the environment, people and/or property	0.1

How we use assessment scores

The number and severity of non-compliances recorded in a year will affect your annual subsistence fee the following year. A non-compliance factor is added to your site's Operator Performance Risk Appraisal (OPRA) score when we calculate your fee to reflect the additional resource we use to assess permit compliance.

If your assessment result in Section 1 is suspended, what does this mean?

In line with our guidance, we may suspend scores for up to six months to allow time for remedial action to be taken. Suspended scores will be re-instated if the action is not completed.

Full list of Industry compliance criteria (used in section 1 and 2):**1. Management**

- IR1A – General management
- IR1B – Finance (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR1C – Energy efficiency
- IR1D - Efficient use of raw materials
- IR1E - Avoidance, recovery and disposal of wastes produced by the activities
- IR1F - Multiple operator installations

2. Operations

- IR2A – Permitted activities
- IR2B – The site
- IR2C – Operating techniques
- IR2D – Technical requirements
- IR2E – Improvement programme
- IR2F – Pre-operational conditions
- IR2G – Landfill engineering (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2H – Waste acceptance (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2I – Leachate levels (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2J – Closure and aftercare (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2K – Landfill gas management (only applicable to Landfill)

3. Emission and Monitoring

- IR3A(1) – Emissions to water
- IR3A(2) – Emissions to air
- IR3A(3) – Emissions to land
- IR3B – Emissions of substances not controlled by emission limits
- IR3C – Odour
- IR3D – Noise and vibration
- IR3E – Monitoring
- IR3F – Pests
- IR3G – Air quality management plans
- IR3H – Monitoring for the purposes of the Industrial Emissions Directive (this heading includes Large Combustion Plants)
- IR3I – Fire

4. Information

- IR4A – Records
- IR4B – Reporting
- IR4C – Notification

Enforcement response

Any non-compliance with a permit condition is an offence and we may take legal action against you. Action we take can include prosecution, serving a notice on you and/or suspension or revocation of your permit. See our Enforcement and Sanctions Guidance for further information.

Data protection notice

You should make sure that anyone named in this report knows that the information it contains will be processed by Natural Resources Wales to fulfil its regulatory and monitoring functions and to maintain the relevant public register(s).

We may also use and/or disclose the report in connection with:

- offering or providing you with our literature or services relating to environmental matters
- consulting with the public, public bodies and other organisations (e.g. Health and Safety Executive, local authorities) on environmental issues
- carrying out statistical analysis, research and development on environmental issues
- providing public register information to enquirers
- investigating possible breaches of environmental law
- assessing customer service satisfaction and improving our service
- Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations requests.

We may also pass it on to our agents or representatives to do these things on our behalf.

Disclosure of information – this report will be available to view on-line

If you think this report contains commercially confidential information that should not be placed on our public register, you must contact your local Natural Resources Wales office within **fifteen working days** of receiving this report, using the contact details in the accompanying email or letter. You must give a full explanation of why it should not be added to our public register, including specifying which information is commercially confidential. We will assess your request and respond to you within twenty working days to let you know if we agree to your request.

Disputing the Content of this Compliance Assessment Report Form

If you disagree with the content of this Compliance Assessment Report form, you should submit your concerns, in writing, to the regulating officer who issued it within **15 working days** of its issue. This will be treated as a **Stage 1 review**.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the stage 1 review, you may request a **Stage 2 appeal**. This request must be submitted **within 21 working days** of receiving the response from the stage 1 review.

Further details on our review and appeal process are available at: [Natural Resources Wales / Appeal a regulatory decision from Natural Resources Wales](#)

Concerns Not Related to the Content of this Compliance Assessment Report Form

If your concerns do not relate to the content of the Compliance Assessment Report form, you should first attempt to resolve the issue with the regulating officer or their line manager.

If the issue remains unresolved, please contact our **Customer Contact Team**:

- **Telephone:** 0300 065 3000 (Monday to Friday, 09:00–17:00)
- **Email:** enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

They will provide details on how to escalate your concerns through our **Complaints and Commendations procedure**.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may contact the **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**:

- **Telephone:** 0300 790 0203
- **Email:** ask@ombudsman.wales

Welsh Language Standards

We are committed to establishing Natural Resources Wales as a naturally bilingual organisation. We will provide compliance reports in your preferred language.