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Release document

MEMORANDUM FOR: E. F. Hawkins, Deputy Director
Uranium Recovery Field Office

FROM: A. Bill Beach, Director
Division of Radiation Safety & Safeguards

SUBJECT: AUGMENTED INSPECTION AT SEQUOYAH FUELS FACILITY - TEAM
CHARTER

You are hereby designated the leader of an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) that is to review the discovery of water and soil at the Sequoyah Fuels Facility that was contaminated with concentrations of uranium well in excess of NRC limits. Your team, to be composed of members from Region IV and URFO, is to develop factual information concerning this situation and to brief Region IV management concerning your results.

The AIT should concentrate its efforts in the following areas:

1. Determine the extent, if any, of licensee and contractor employee exposure to uranium while digging the excavation and installing the vault. Establish a chronology of licensee actions, including preparation of the excavation, discovery of the contamination, samples taken and results, notifications to offsite authorities, and related information.
2. Establish a chronology of the history of the solvent extraction (SX) building. Identify and obtain copies of licensee documents related to: (a) process system leakage; (b) degradation, leakage, and repair of the SX building floor and sump; (c) maintenance and construction activities underground outside the SX building; and (d) radiation and contamination measurements made outside the SX building.
3. Determine whether, following the January 1986 accident, Pickard, Lowe and Garrick, Inc. evaluated and commented on aspects of the SX building related to building integrity and environmental contamination.
4. Review the licensees' environmental data and reports from 1980 (or earlier) to the present time to determine whether, in retrospect, they reveal any indication of groundwater contamination attributable to the SX building.

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5. Determine licensee plans concerning the decontamination of the affected areas. This includes review of the licensee's plans for characterizing the extent of contamination beneath and beyond the SX building. Determine the ability of those planned actions to quantify the depth, breadth, and concentration of the below-ground contamination and whether the planned actions could worsen the situation, for example in causing the near-surface water to communicate with ground water.

The AIT is to be conducted in accordance with NRC Manual Chapter 93800, "Augmented Inspection Team Implementing Procedure." The team is to emphasize fact finding in its review of the circumstances surrounding the event. It is not the responsibility of the team to determine regulatory findings at this time. Safety concerns identified that are not directly related to the event under consideration should be reported to the regional office for appropriate action.

The AIT should arrive at the Sequoyah Fuels site the morning of August 27, 1990, and should plan to complete its investigation by August 31, 1990. A report documenting the results of the investigation should be issued within 3 weeks of the completion of your efforts. While the team is onsite, you will provide daily status briefings to Region IV management who will ensure that all other parties are kept well informed.

Original Signed:

A. B. BEACH:

A. Bill Beach, Director
Division of Radiation Safety
and Safeguards

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