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CHEMETRON CORPORATION

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November 20, 1992

Mr. Charles E. Norelius, Director
Division of Radiation Safety and Safeguards
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region III
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

RE: Chemetron Corporation Response to Inspection Report No. 04008724/92003

Mr. Norelius:

Reply to a Notice of Violation

Pursuant to 10 CFR 2.201, this letter responds to the Notice of Violation transmitted under cover of your letter dated October 1, 1992, and the other matters raised in the letter.

Restatement of Violations

The NRC statement of the violations is as follows:

1. 10 CFR 19.12 requires, in part, that all individuals working in a restricted area be instructed in the precautions and procedures to minimize exposure to radioactive materials, in the purpose and functions of protective devices employed, and in the applicable provisions of the Commission's regulations and licenses.

Contrary to the above, on 10 occasions between April 15, 1991, and July 17, 1992, outside contractors who were working in restricted areas of the McGean-Rohco plant had not been instructed in the applicable provisions of the regulations and the conditions of the license.

This is a Severity Level IV violation (Supplement IV).

2. 10 CFR 20.201(b) requires that each licensee make such surveys as may be necessary to comply with the requirements of Part 20 and which are reasonable under the circumstances to evaluate the extent of radiation hazards that may be present. As defined in 10 CFR 20.201(a), "survey" means an evaluation of the

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radiation hazards incident to the production, use, release, disposal, or presence of radioactive materials or other sources of radiation under a specific set of conditions.

Contrary to the above, on 9 occasions between April 26, 1991, and February 12, 1992, the licensee did not make surveys to assure compliance with 10 CFR 20.101, which limits the radiation exposure to individuals in restricted areas or to determine that individuals were not exposed to airborne concentrations exceeding limits in 10 CFR 20.103. Specifically, McGean-Rohco employees worked on equipment in restricted areas without prior notification of the Radiological Controls Technician (RCT) so that appropriate surveys could be conducted to evaluate the radiation hazards which may be present.

This is a Severity Level IV violation (Supplement IV).

Reply to Violations

Reasons for Violations

The violations resulted from failure of personnel to comply with the Radiological Control Plan. These failures resulted from an inadequate system to prompt and record compliance with the program.

Corrective Steps Taken and Results Achieved

1. Access to the McGean-Rohco facility is restricted by a continuous fence and the entrance ways are monitored. All visitors, including contractors, must sign in before they are admitted. Instructions have been posted at the sign-in station that anyone whose business takes them into the restricted area will have to be briefed prior to entry and will have to be escorted during their stay in the area.

The sign-in sheet has been modified to show when the HPT was notified of the contractor. Furthermore, a place has been added to the sheet for the initials of the individual who served as the escort.

2. The Radiological Control Program for the McGean-Rohco facility requires that surveys be performed to evaluate the radiation hazards before any maintenance work is performed. Subsequent to the NRC inspection, memoranda were distributed to all maintenance personnel and all plant supervisory personnel instructing them on the requirement for radiation surveys prior to working on equipment. These written instructions were followed by work place meetings to stress the importance of the requirement.

Mr. Charles E. Norelius
November 20, 1992
Page 3

As a further control, all maintenance work orders must be reviewed and signed by the HPT before the work begins. The HPT's work day starts earlier than the rest of the staff to ensure there is adequate time to review the day's work orders.

Corrective Steps That Will Be Taken to Avoid the Potential for Future Violations

The Chemetron Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) performs an audit of the McGean-Rohco Radiological Control Program quarterly. The most recent audit was conducted November 6, 1992. At that time, and at all future times, the RSO will specifically review compliance with the corrective actions described above. His audit report will indicate his review of these areas.

In addition, the Chemetron Site Supervisor reviews the activities of the McGean-Rohco HPT each week. In future weekly reviews, the Site Supervisor and the McGean-Rohco Director of Human Relations & Safety will confirm that all of the maintenance work orders for the week were signed-off by the HPT. They will also review the overtime log to compare the hours worked by the maintenance staff and the HPT.

Date When Full Compliance Will Be Achieved

Considering the actions taken, Chemetron respectfully submits that it is in compliance with the cited license conditions.

Response to NRC's Concern

In addition to identifying the apparent violations described above, your letter expresses the NRC's concern over the lack of progress in establishing decommissioning plans for the McGean-Rohco factory buildings. You state that you recognize the buildings are restricted for radiation purposes, but you expect Chemetron to initiate action to remediate this site.

Chemetron recognizes its responsibility for any necessary remediation arising as a direct result of the operations involving licensed material. As you are aware, both Chemetron Corporation and McGean-Rohco are co-defendants in litigation regarding the Bert Avenue and Harvard Avenue sites. The Federal District Court has scheduled a settlement conference for December 9, 1992, at which all parties, including Chemetron and McGean-Rohco, will be represented. At that time, Chemetron intends to raise with McGean the financial responsibility of each defendant for the factory cleanup. We expect to be able to report to you shortly after the December 9, 1992, conference.

Chemetron does not want to leave the impression that no actions have been taken regarding the McGean-Rohco complex. Radiological controls have been in place at the McGean-Rohco factory for the past 20 months. Over that period, there have been no instances of worker exposure or

K. Charles E. Norelius
November 20, 1992
Page 4

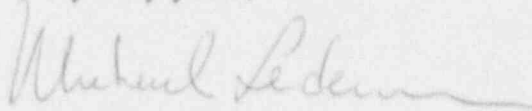
contamination. At the same time, McGean-Rohco has taken a number of steps to decontaminate portions of the plant and to remove contaminated materials from the work place. Since the start of the effort, contaminated components that have been discovered have either been cleaned to free release levels or put in a locked area for future disposition. Presently, there are 242 tagged items in storage.

In accordance with the Radiological Control Plan, all work areas are surveyed before activities commence. If contamination is found, it is removed. As a result, several areas of the factory have already been cleaned to below NRC release limits. For example, the floor of Room G in Building 10 was decontaminated before installation of a large pelletizer. Recently, the roof above Room C in Building 10 was repaired. Prior to the work, the roof was surveyed and decontaminated. The release survey was transmitted to the NRC for information.

I understand that McGean-Rohco intends to continue to remove contaminants from equipment and buildings as they are encountered. The company recently purchased a vacublaster to facilitate decontaminating certain surfaces. All decontaminations are conducted in accordance with plans approved by Chemetron's RSO and are reviewed by the Chemetron Site Supervisor.

Should you have any questions regarding this response, please contact me or Dr. Barry Koh at (410) 356-6612.

Very truly yours,



Michael G. Lederman
President

cc: Barry Koh
Mark J. Wetterhahn
Eric Abelquist
James E. Vamos
Robert Gahr
James A. Lucas