



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

NIOSH Reference: TN-06205

Centers for Disease Control
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health - ALOSH
944 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505-2888
August 20, 1992

Mr. LeMoine J. Cunningham
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has received your letter of August 12, 1992, concerning nonconformances with Mine Safety Appliances Company (MSA) Ultraview and Ultratwin negative-pressure facepieces.

The investigation of these reported nonconformances has been assigned NIOSH Task Number TN-06205. Mr. Jeffrey L. Gutshall of MSA has been contacted, and NIOSH awaits the manufacturer's report of investigation concerning this matter. You will be kept informed of the developments concerning this investigation.

If NIOSH can be of further assistance, feel free to contact this office.

Sincerely yours,

Richard W. Metzler, Chief
Certification and Quality
Assurance Branch
Division of Safety Research

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

NIOSH Reference: TN-06205

Jim
Tom

Centers for Disease Control
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health - ALOSH
944 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505-2888
August 31, 1992

Mr. Jeffrey L. Gutshall
Mine Safety Appliances Company
P.O. Box 439
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15230

Dear Mr. Gutshall:

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has received a report of nonconformances with the MSA Ultraview and Ultratwin negative-pressure facepieces. These nonconformances reportedly involve microphones and filter gaskets being installed upside down, a missing inhalation valve disc, and improperly installed lens rings.

These nonconformances have been reported to NIOSH by Mr. LeMoine J. Cunningham of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. A copy of the letter initiating this investigation is enclosed.

The investigation and ultimate resolution of this nonconformance investigation have been assigned NIOSH Task Number TN-06205. The MSA report of investigation and proposed corrective action, if any, should be submitted by September 18, 1992. Special consideration should be given to Mr. Cunningham's concern about notifying other users of the need to closely inspect their own respirators for similar nonconformances.

Please provide this office with a list of all model and certification numbers involved in this investigation.

Sincerely yours,

John M. Metzler
Richard W. Metzler, Chief
Certification and Quality
Assurance Branch
Division of Safety Research

Enclosure

cc:
L. Cunningham (NRC)



Mine Safety Appliances Company • Safety Products Engineering • P.O. Box 439 • Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Telephone: (412) 776-7700

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NO

(412) 776-7740

September 17, 1992

Mr. Richard Metzler
Certification Branch
NIOSH
944 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505

RE: Reported MSA Facepiece Problems TN-06205
MSA REF: NP92-48

Dear Mr. Metzler:

This is in response to your letter dated August 31, 1992.

MSA was made aware of this problem through our field representative. A subsequent investigation confirmed that these respirators were not representative of the quality our customers have come to expect from MSA. The subject respirators were repaired and returned to the customer.

These respirators are not stocked equipped with a communications package. This is usually added by the user through the use of a kit. In this instance, a number of respirators were supplied so equipped through a special order.

The positioning of the microphone can be changed by the user to suit preference. If, however, the microphone is in the lower quadrant of the facepiece, it can interfere with our DOP test fixturing. This is why it is shown in the 12:00 position on the drawing. Any other position is user determined and is cosmetic.

Our information confirms this problem is isolated to this special order. It is conceivable that some of these escaped normal Q.C. inspection.

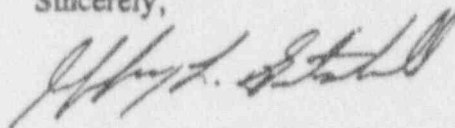
The lens ring assembly procedures, as well as the valve, gasketing and other installations are monitored by each worker in the work cell. Furthermore, each facepiece is normally 100% DOP inspected and random post production samples are removed and inspected. Q.C. has been alerted to this problem and has reviewed the inspection procedures with production personnel.

MSA sold over 50,000 Ultra-Twin respirators in 1991. Thousands have been sold to commercial nuclear users. A greater number were purchased by the D.O.E. No other problems have been reported. This confirms the finding at Trojan that a 100% inspection of their stock found no other defective respirators.

MSA is convinced that this is not a generic problem with our products. Our internal review, the customer review, as well as a review of field experience confirm this as an isolated incident.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey L. Gutshall", written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey L. Gutshall
Design Engineer,
Government Relations
Safety Products Division

JLG:lb



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

NIOSH Reference: TN-06205

Centers for Disease Control
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health - ALOSH
944 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505-2888
October 13, 1992

Mr. LeMoine J. Cunningham, Chief
Radiation Protection Branch
Division of Radiation Protection
and Emergency Preparedness
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

This letter is in response to your request that the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) investigate respirator nonconformances. The complaint involved Mine Safety Appliances Company (MSA) full face negative-pressure respirators. The concerns include: improperly installed microphones, filter gaskets, lens rings, and distorted rubber around the lens ring. This investigation involved both Ultra Twin and Ultra View facepieces.

After investigating these nonconformances, MSA believes that these problems are restricted to a special order prepared for one customer (copy enclosed). No similar problems have been reported to NIOSH or MSA. The existing data does not support the hypothesis that a generic defect is present in MSA facepieces. A user notice will not be issued by MSA at this time. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission could certainly issue a notice to the nuclear industry if it is deemed necessary. The importance of following approved quality control procedures during manufacture is being reinforced to MSA by NIOSH.

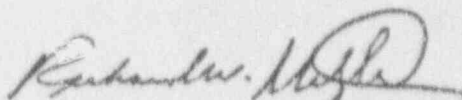
It is the conclusion of NIOSH that satisfactory progress has been made toward the resolution of this problem. Task Number TN-06205 will be considered closed.

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Page 2 - Mr. LeMoine J. Cunningham, Chief

Thank you for reporting this problem to NIOSH. Any future problems with certified respirators should be reported to this office.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Metzler", with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Richard W. Metzler, Chief
Certification and Quality
Assurance Branch
Division of Safety Research

Enclosure



Enclosure 6
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Mine Safety Appliances Company • P.O. Box 426 • Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Telephone: (412) 967-3000

Writers Direct Dial No.

December 11, 1992

LeMoine J. Cunningham, Chief
Radiation Protection Branch
Division of Radiation Safety and Safeguards
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop 10D4
Washington, D.C. 20555

RE: Reported Respirator Problems at Trojan Nuclear

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

This is in response to our phone conversation of December 9, 1992.

You are in receipt of our letter of September 17, 1992, to NIOSH outlining the respirator problems at Trojan Nuclear. The problems encountered at Trojan centered on some special orders from MSA. As stated in that letter, we have had no other similar problems with the over 50,000 Ultra-Twin respirators sold in 1991 or any others sold to date in 1992. We consider this to be an isolated incident and are convinced that this not a generic problem with our products.

To prevent any reoccurrence of this type of problem, we have reviewed our inspection procedures for special material with our production personnel. We reinforced the importance of following established manufacturing and inspection procedures. We have also taken steps necessary to reduce occurrence of this type problem and I am confident we have been successful.

If you have any question, please contact me.

Sincerely,

R. D. Grunberg
Product Line Mgr.

cc: Jeff Gutshall
Ron Herring
Bill Lambert

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