



UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
COLLEGE, ALASKA 99701

September 24, 1970

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action

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U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Isotopes Branch
Division of Materials Licensing
Washington, D.C. 20545

ATT: John E. Bowyer

Gentlemen:

A recent incident occurring at the Cantwell Reindeer Research Station, Cantwell, Alaska, is of sufficient interest and importance, I believe, to justify a report to your department. On September 11, 1970 one research animal, a reindeer calf, was missing from the herd. A search of the area revealed the remains of the missing reindeer, including the head, intact with two metal ear tags; an identification tag and a "radioactive materials" tag, as well as parts of the hide and bones of the front legs. Conclusive evidence was not found supporting the possibility that a human was responsible for the act and the meat was taken for human consumption. However, this possibility can not be ignored. If in fact a human was responsible, we believe one of the local natives was the most logical offenders. Following the discovery of the calf's remains, we immediately notified the local Cantwell people and let it be known that the animal contained radioisotopes and the meat should not be consumed.

It should be noted that the experimental reindeer are contained in a fenced pasture and are marked with "radiation materials" ear tags. To date, an experimental animal has not been found outside the retaining fence.

At the time of death, the reindeer calf had a cesium-134 body burden of approximately 7 microcuries. If it is assumed that one individual consumes the entire carcass and the biological half-time of cesium-134 is 80 days (Health Physics, 18:6, 1970), the resulting maximum accumulated dose would be approximately 0.5 rem. Since the accumulated radiation dose is within the M.P.D. for non-occupational exposure, the incident was not considered to present substantial hazard to unknown person or persons involved.

This incident was discussed with Radiation Specialist H.S. North of the San Francisco Office during the recent inspection of AEC license number 50-2430-9 (September 14, 1970). He advised a report of the incident.

Sincerely yours,

COPIES

SENT TO COMPLIANCE

Dan Holleman, Ph.D.

Dan Holleman

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PDR FOIA
BOURKE92-473 PDR

PLEASE REPLY BY AIRMAIL