

January 24, 1997

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-97-004

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by Region III staff (Lisle, Illinois) on this date.

Facility
U.S. ENRICHMENT CORPORATION SIEMENS POWER
CORPORATION
Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant
Piketon, Ohio
License No: SNM-1227

Licensee Emergency Classification
Notification of Unusual Event
Alert
Site Area Emergency
General Emergency
X Not Applicable

Subject: TRUCK CARRYING FOUR URANIUM HEXAFLUORIDE CYLINDERS IN ACCIDENT

On January 24, 1997, a flat bed trailer transporting four 2.5 ton solid uranium hexafluoride cylinders in protective overpacks, was involved in an accident on Interstate 80 in Scott County near Walcott, Iowa. The accident occurred at approximately 7:00 a.m. CST during a snow and ice storm. The truck was transporting the cylinders from the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant to Siemens Power Corporation in Richland, Washington. All four uranium hexafluoride cylinders and their overpacks remained intact and no injuries were reported.

The Scott County Hazard Materials Team responded to the accident site and conducted radiological surveys. There were no observed releases of material and surveys indicated a maximum radiation level of 1 micro-Sievert (0.1 millirem) per hour, normal levels for such shipments. A crane was utilized to upright the trailer and the trailer with the four cylinders and overpacks was secured in a locked, fenced area in the vicinity. Representatives of the United States Enrichment Corporation and Siemens Power Corporation are discussing whether to complete the shipment to Siemens or return it to Portsmouth.

The plant is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Energy until March 3, 1997. The NRC has resident inspectors at the Portsmouth facility in preparation for NRC assuming regulatory jurisdiction over the site. Siemens Power Corporation is an NRC licensee located in Richland, Washington.

The State of Iowa, the NRC Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards and NRC Region IV (Arlington, Texas) have been informed. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with the Department of Energy and Siemens Power Corporation.

9701270029 970104
PDR I&E
PNO-III-97-004 PDR

270002

1E34
0/1

PN397004
JANUARY 24, 1997
PAGE 2

There has been media interest in this event.

NRC Region III (Chicago) was notified of this event at 10:00 a.m. (CST) on January 24, 1997. This information is current as of 2:30 p.m. (CST) on January 24, 1997. Region III will continue to monitor this event.

Contact: GARY SHEAR
(630)829-9876

CHARLES COX
(614)289-3353