

January 28, 1997

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-97-009

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 I staff in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania on this date.

Facility

Avslo
Avslo
1312 North 2nd Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: FOLLOW-UP OF A REPORT OF JET ENGINE HELD BY A SCRAP METAL FACILITY

On August 6, 1996, Region I was notified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) that a jet engine that was sent for recycling by a facility (AVSLO) in Philadelphia was returned to the facility because it was radioactive. On October 3, 1996, Region I sent an inspector to the site located at 1312 North 2nd Street in Philadelphia to review the item. The owner of the facility stated that the item in question was a jet engine that he acquired along with other scrap materials from a location near Philadelphia Airport.

The item is a Turbo Jet Engine (Air Force Model T 55 - L7B and Manufacturer Model No. LTC - 4B - 8B). The item was approximately 40 inches long and 15 inches in diameter. Radiation dose rates at the surface were less than 2 mR/hour and approximately 0.2 mR/hr at 1 meter from it. The radioactivity appeared to be around the rear of the engine.

According to the owner of the scrap yard, personnel from the Department of the Army also visited the facility to inspect the item but declined to advise him as to how he could dispose of the item. The owner retained a health physicist to help him dispose of the item properly. The item was tagged by the health physicist indicating that it is radioactive and the dose rates are also posted on the tag. The item was stored in the rear of the yard. The owner did not plan to dismantle or conduct processing of any sort on the item.

RI concluded that the item probably contained exempt licensed material in the form of magnesium thorium alloy. Since possession of the material does not require an NRC license, USEPA and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection were notified and Region I took no further action in accordance with current NRC policy.

Region I was notified on January 28, 1997, that the item had disappeared from the site. The City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Police and PADEP, assuming that the magnesium in the item posed a fire hazard, were holding a press conference this afternoon on this subject. PADEP plans to issue a press release either late Tuesday, January 28 or early Wednesday about the missing jet engine.

The Region I Office of Public Affairs is prepared to respond to media

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inquiries. This information is current as of 3:30 p.m. January 28, 1997.

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