



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

October 30, 1996

DOCKET NO: 70-734

LICENSEE: General Atomics (GA)
San Diego, California

SUBJECT: SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT: APPLICATION DATED AUGUST 23, 1996,
GROUP 8B LABORATORIES RELEASED FOR UNRESTRICTED USE

BACKGROUND

In correspondence dated August 23, 1996, GA requested their license be amended to remove authorized activities at the Group 8B Laboratories and release them for unrestricted use. GA conducted a survey of the facilities and provided the results of that survey in their submittal. The licensee used the same methodology as during the previous decontamination and decommissioning of the Group 6 and Group 7 Laboratories.

DISCUSSION

General Atomics has completed the decontamination of the Group 8B Laboratories. They submitted a final report entitled, "Decontamination of Selected General Atomics' Science Laboratories for Release to Unrestricted Use (Group 8B)," dated August 23, 1996, and requested the laboratories be release for unrestricted use in a letter also dated August 23, 1996. The methodology and decontamination techniques were the same as used in the Group 6 and Group 7 laboratories which have been previously released. The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) and the State of California performed an onsite review and verification of the activities and licensee procedures associated with the decommissioning, characterization, and survey methodology used by General Atomics for the Group 8B laboratories to ensure conformance to draft NUREG/CR-5849. The ORISE effort is documented in the attached letter dated October 17, 1996, in which they confirm that all activity is below the NRC guidelines for release for unrestricted use.

The licensee's survey data showed that any remaining residual radioactivity in the Group 8B Laboratories was well below the criteria established in "Guidelines for Decontamination of Facilities and Equipment Prior to Release for Unrestricted Use or Termination of Licenses for Byproduct, Source or Special Nuclear Material," dated April 1993, as incorporated in General Atomics Materials License SNM-696. The State of California has approved the release of the Group 8B laboratories. Based upon the licensee's previous performance history with the Group 6 laboratories (Inspection Report 70-0734/95-01) it was stated "... the licensee's current program for the Group 6 laboratories appears capable of accomplishing current and future decommissioning activities in a satisfactory manner and is in accordance with the guidance contained in draft NUREG/CR-5849." Insofar as the licensee followed the same rigorous approach in decommissioning the Group 8B

laboratories as in the Group 6 and 7 laboratories, and the results of the ORISE survey confirm the licensees findings, the decommissioning activities appear satisfactory.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Based on the information submitted by GA, the staff has determined that the changes to the license are related to decreased operations at the facility resulting from the proposed overall decommissioning of the site. Accordingly, the staff has determined that the criteria in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(11) for categorically excluding an action from an environmental review have been met. Therefore, neither an Environmental Assessment nor Environmental Impact Statement is necessary for this action.

CONCLUSION

The staff concludes that GA's request to reduce licensed sanctioned activities meets regulatory requirements and that there is reasonable assurance that the proposed action will not adversely impact upon the health and safety of the public or the environment.

The Region IV Principal Inspector has no objection to this proposed action.

Principal Contributors

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