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Official Transcript of Proceedings

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title: Interview of Patrick W. Baranowski

Docket Number: (not assigned)

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Pages 1-12

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ADDENDUM

Page	Line	Correction and Reason for Correction
1	7	Last name misspelled should be Baranowsky. Same problem on many subsequent pages.
9	4	"pulls" should be "closes"
9	7	paragraph should start with "If"

Page 1 Date 11/9/95 Signature PL Baranowsky

1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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3 NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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5 INCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM

6 + + + + +

7 INTERVIEW OF PATRICK W. BARANOWSKI

8 + + + + +

9 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1995

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14 The interview took place in Room 4B-3 of the Nuclear
15 Regulatory Commission Building Number Two, Rockville,
16 Maryland, at 2:00 p.m., John E. Glenn, Chief Investigator,
17 presiding.

18 INTERVIEWERS:

19 JOHN E. GLENN, Chief Investigator

20 BETSY ULLRICH

21 SAMI SHERBINI

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23
24
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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(1:05 p.m.)

MR. GLENN: Today is August --

MS. ULLRICH: August?

(Laughter.)

MR. GLENN: -- November 6, 1995. The time is approximately 2:00 p.m. This is an interview being conducted as a part of the Incident Investigation Team looking into the uptake of P-32 for a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in August of this year.

First, I'd like to just cover a little bit about how the interview is being conducted, and why transcripts are being taken.

Could we go off the record?

(Off the record.)

MR. GLENN: The time is a few minutes after 2:00. We're going back on the record.

I was just starting to explain a little bit about the purpose of the ITT and why it's being transcribed and that sort of thing.

The IIT is not -- well, is a fact-finding group who are to find out what happened, the probable cause of what happened, and then to develop any lessons learned that can pass along to the licensee and to the

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1 NRC. We're not the fault-finding part of the NRC, so
2 we're not doing that kind of investigation.

3 We transcribe for two reasons. One, it frees
4 us from taking extensive notes and having to worry about
5 whether we're reporting it correctly or not. And, two,
6 the findings of the IIT need to come out of the record
7 that we create, and that can be the documents we collect
8 and the interviews we conduct, and having a formally
9 transcribed interview helps us. We find ourselves
10 referring to the transcripts often just to clarify what
11 was said and what wasn't said, so it's a big help to us in
12 doing that.

13 The transcript will be available for review in
14 about 24 hours, so tomorrow you could check with Cherie
15 and she can make the transcript available to you. You're
16 not allowed to actually change the transcript, but you can
17 fill out an errata sheet on which you can note anything
18 that was misunderstood, misspoken, or left out. You can
19 note that on the errata sheet.

20 At this time, I'd like the other members of
21 the interviewing team to introduce themselves and describe
22 their positions.

23 MS. ULLRICH: My name is Betsy Ullrich, and
24 I'm a senior health physicist in the Region I office.

25 MR. SHERBINI: I'm Sami Sherbini, from NMSS.

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1 MR. GLENN: Pat, if you could introduce
2 yourself, and describe briefly what your position is.

3 MR. BARANOWSKI: Okay. I'm Pat Baranowski,
4 and I'm Chief of the Reliability and Risk Assessment
5 Branch, and that branch has two sections in it. One is
6 the Reliability and Risk Assessment Section, the other one
7 is the Nuclear Materials Assessment Section, and there's
8 about 15 people in it, and we review events and have
9 operating experience data systems that we manage.

10 MR. GLENN: I don't have any questions with
11 respect to the database. We interviewed Sam Pettijohn and
12 Harriet Karagiannis before. I wonder if you could just
13 briefly run down for us what your expectations are in
14 terms of the analysis of that data, and how that analysis
15 is to be fed back to the Program Office and to licensees.

16 MR. BARANOWSKI: Okay. There's a routine
17 review that occurs for -- we're talking about materials
18 events -- for materials events that is done by people in
19 the Nuclear Materials Assessment Section. Each person is
20 assigned a primary and a secondary area of review, and
21 they review the events in their areas to determine whether
22 or not an event has some significant -- and we have some
23 written guidance -- I guess it's in draft, but it's still
24 written guidance -- and if it is significant, then we have
25 to take an action to determine whether or not we should

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1 follow it up further, or sufficient follow-up is being
2 taken by others, or whether it appears to be one in a
3 string of things that we may want to go back and take a
4 look at and see if there's some sort of a pattern
5 associated with it.

6 When we do find either a significant event or
7 a number of them, then we may do a study on them, or we
8 may follow up and see what other offices are doing, or how
9 an investigation is going on, just to make sure in our
10 minds that the things that we thought were significant
11 were being closed out without any open questions. That's
12 sort of our independent review, if you will, of the
13 events.

14 When we do reports, we usually send them out
15 for review, and we may have some conclusions and
16 recommendations as a result. In addition to that, of
17 course, we manage the data systems, but that's about it in
18 a nutshell.

19 MR. GLENN: Do you have any formal contact
20 with the NMSS Program Office in terms of what your
21 findings are?

22 MR. BARANOWSKI: I don't think we have any
23 formalized contacts in terms of we regularly meet with
24 them to go over specific items, although one member of our
25 section normally will go to the NMSS briefings that

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1 they'll have. And that's the only sort of periodic thing
2 that we work with NMSS, otherwise, it's sort of ad hoc
3 event-by-event or issue-by-issue basis.

4 MR. GLENN: Information notices, do you
5 recommend those, or does the Program Office recommend
6 those?

7 MR. BARANOWSKI: We can recommend them, and we
8 have recommended information notices. Normally, when we
9 recommend an information notice, what we are recommending
10 is that certain lessons be communicated for licensees, and
11 even though we might say "recommend an information
12 notice", it could come out as an article in an NMSS
13 newsletter. The main thing we're interested in is making
14 some communication with those people who should have that
15 kind of information.

16 MR. GLENN: Do you notice any differences in
17 the way information is handled that comes from Agreement
18 States or NRC licensees?

19 MR. BARANOWSKI: Handled by us, or in how we
20 get it?

21 MR. GLENN: I guess how you would get it as a
22 start.

23 MR. BARANOWSKI: You're probably aware of
24 this, but the stuff from the Agreement States was coming
25 in in batches, maybe a yearly batch at one time, and it

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1 was questionable in terms of its completeness and quality.

2 Over the last year and a half, two years,
3 there's been an effort by NRC staff, NMSS, AEOD, and
4 Office of State Programs, to work with the Agreement
5 States to get more timely reporting of information and in
6 a more consistent manner.

7 Now, there's a trial program going on in which
8 we're trying to get them to submit information that's been
9 structured like the Nuclear Material Events Database,
10 which has the kinds of things that NRC normally would like
11 to see in a report because there are fairly limited
12 reporting guidance available to the Agreement States, and
13 they are supposed to be their own regulators, so it's
14 questionable as to how rigorous and specific we can be on
15 giving them reporting guidance, but we're into that trial
16 program.

17 My impression is that the reporting from
18 Agreement States has been more timely, and has been
19 better, and they're certainly cooperating whenever we try
20 to follow up on an event. So, I would say our interaction
21 and the type of material that we're able to get them has
22 apparently improved, but I can't say that it's necessarily
23 up to where we'd want it to be in terms of what we get
24 from non-Agreement State types of reports.

25 MR. GLENN: Are the number of reports we're

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1 receiving from the Agreement States now at least
2 approximately equal to, or slightly greater than the
3 number we're getting from NRC?

4 MR. BARANOWSKI: I can't tell you that. I'd
5 have to ask Sam Pettijohn who primarily would have that
6 information.

7 MR. GLENN: Betsy?

8 MS. ULLRICH: No, I don't have any additional
9 now.

10 MR. GLENN: Sam?

11 MR. SHERBINI: Just one question. Is there
12 some kind of mechanism to track these events and come up
13 with conclusions, like some areas might need some
14 attention, or some areas might be adequately covered by
15 regulation?

16 MR. BARANOWSKI: Yeah. We do have -- we do
17 track the events in terms of when an event is reviewed and
18 determined to be significant based on the criteria I told
19 you we had in that written guidance. And we can get you
20 that if you want it.

21 MR. GLENN: Yeah, I was wondering, is there a
22 name that we can refer to?

23 MR. BARANOWSKI: Yeah, I think it's AEOD
24 Procedure 3.3. It is draft, but the criteria are in
25 there, and I don't think the criteria would be changing,

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1 but some of the other stuff might. But at any rate, when
2 something is significant, it gets flagged in our Event
3 Tracking System that we have. And then the individual
4 whose following up on that pulls it out according to
5 certain criterion steps that we've laid out, and that's
6 the way we keep track of sort of open issues, if you will.

7 Someone proposes a more thorough study instead
8 of a single event look, or just a general follow-up, in
9 which they would be assembling more data, analyzing the
10 data, collecting more information to understand causes and
11 effects, then we have a formal study which I track in my
12 own branch tracking system.

13 So, it's either tracked through our Event
14 Tracking System, or if it's under study, then it goes into
15 a sort of a branch assignment system.

16 MR. SHERBINI: How about the general sense
17 like, for example, there's too many nuclear medicine
18 clinicians being overexposed, or something like that.

19 MR. BARANOWSKI: We had been just year-by-year
20 assembling that information, one reason being the
21 Agreement State information didn't come in except for
22 yearly anyhow. But what I've been discussing with the
23 section, and I think we're going to implement this year,
24 is a scheme in which as the data gets in and we start to
25 build up some trends, which maybe we could have a monthly

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1 or quarterly indication of how things are going with
2 regard to certain types of events.

3 Now, the only problem with that is, it's
4 really and truly bean count -- you know, all you're going
5 to see is how many radiography overexposures there were,
6 or lost sources, or something like that -- and that's easy
7 to do. What I'm trying to do is come up with a way that
8 gives me a better measure of importance and some insights
9 about the events, and we don't really have that, but it's
10 in our plan to work on in fiscal year '96.

11 MR. GLENN: Just clarify one thing that you've
12 already mentioned, and that is, do we have -- does the
13 NRC, AEOD, have any mechanisms for gathering what I will
14 call "denominator" information so that we could actually
15 determine rates, how many times an operation is done
16 successfully compared to how many times there's a failure?

17 MR. BARANOWSKI: No, we don't have any
18 mechanism for doing that but, remember, time is a
19 denominator, too, and it can be a very good denominator,
20 especially if the opportunities are relatively constant.
21 But even if they're not, and we see increases in things
22 over time, I think that's a good indicator. But if you
23 want to get more risk-oriented, then maybe you need to
24 know the numbers of opportunities, too. That's going to
25 be pretty difficult to get.

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1 MR. GLENN: Okay. Well, let me give you a
2 sheet that talks about the review and availability of
3 transcripts that you can read, and Cherie Siegel's number
4 is up there at the top. You can contact her sometime
5 tomorrow and you can make arrangements to review the
6 transcript.

7 MR. BARANOWSKI: Okay. Tomorrow I'll be able
8 to get you a copy of that draft procedure that I
9 mentioned.

10 MR. GLENN: What I'll do is I'll follow our
11 procedures and I'll submit a request to Cherie, and she'll
12 send it to you, and she'll track it and make sure --

13 MR. BARANOWSKI: All right. I'm just waiting
14 for my secretary to get back.

15 MR. GLENN: Okay. Appreciate that. I guess
16 before I close the interview, can you think of anything
17 that -- something we haven't covered that we should ask
18 questions about?

19 MR. BARANOWSKI: No. I think you actually
20 asked some good questions. You know, everything is not
21 exactly what I would call perfect, so I think you've
22 delved into the right areas. We're trying to work on
23 them.

24 MR. GLENN: Okay. Well, thank you very much.
25 The time is now 1:16 in the afternoon, and the interview

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1 is completed.

2 (Whereupon, at 2:16 p.m., the interview was
3 conclude.)

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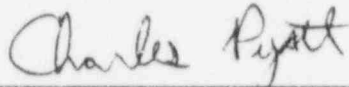
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Regulatory Commission in the matter of:

Name of Proceeding: interview of Patrick W. Baranowski

Docket Number: (not assigned)

Place of Proceeding: ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

were held as herein appears, and that this is the original
transcript thereof for the file of the United States Nuclear
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