



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV

611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-8064

June 17, 1997

Major Paul Feeser
Department of the Air Force
USAF Radioisotope Committee
HQ AFMOA/SGPR
8901 18th Street
Brooks AFB, Texas 78235-5217

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT 030-28641/97-07

Dear Major Feeser:

On May 21, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at Kelley Air Force Base (KAFB), Texas. The inspection included a review of activities authorized by Byproduct Material License 42-23539-01AF under Air Force Permits 42-30050-1AFP and TX-30452-01/00AFP. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with members of the KAFB staff. Additionally, a telephonic exit briefing was conducted with Captain James M. Hicks of the USAF Radioisotope Committee (RIC) on May 27, 1997.

No violations of NRC requirements were identified; therefore, no response to the letter is required.

The inspection revealed that KAFB's radiation safety staff had provided adequate oversight of their program and had maintained an effective record management system. The inspector noted that those individuals who had performed licensed activities had been adequately trained and appeared knowledgeable of permit requirements and NRC regulations.

As discussed with Captain Hicks during the exit briefing on May 27, the inspection also identified an item of concern regarding KAFB's maximum possession limit under Permit 42-30050-1AFP. The inspector noted that on February 10, 1997, the permittee submitted a written request to the USAF RIC to amend its permit to increase the maximum authorized possession limit of plutonium-239 sealed source sets from 50 total source sets to "as needed; not to exceed 2 microcuries per source set." The amendment was requested by KAFB to accommodate anticipated shipments of plutonium-239 alpha standard source sets from several Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratories (PMEL) throughout the Air Force. The request further stated that if the number of "requests to ship" from the PMELs were received within the following 90 days, KAFB would exceed its authorized possession limit of 50 source sets. As of May 21, 1997, the RIC had not issued the amendment. This was noted as an item of concern because, as anticipated by the permittee, KAFB had received several source sets during the preceeding 90 days, and

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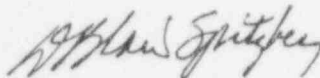


on the date of this inspection was in possession of 59 sources sets, a violation of their permit. Although this does not represent a health and safety issue, it was identified as an item of concern because the NRC expects that the RIC will prioritize its reviews to accommodate such a request that clearly indicates that a delay may cause the permittee to be in violation of a permit condition. In this regard, we encourage the RIC to review its procedures for prioritizing permit amendment requests.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Ms. Linda Mclean at (817) 860-8116 or myself at (817) 860-8191.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. Blair Spitzberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "D. Blair" and last name "Spitzberg" clearly distinguishable.

D. Blair Spitzberg, Ph.D., Chief
Nuclear Materials Inspection and
Fuel Cycle/Decommissioning Branch

Docket: 030-28641
License: 42-23539-01AF

cc:
Texas Radiation Control Program Director

Major Paul Feeser

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Major Paul Feeser

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