

May 9, 1997

EA 97-172

Mr. J. H. Miller
Vice President - Production
United States Enrichment Corporation
Two Democracy Center
6903 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20817

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT 70-7002/97002(DNMS) AND
NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Dear Mr. Miller:

On April 6, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at your Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection.

During the five-week period covered by this inspection report, the inspectors observed that the plant operated in a safe manner; however, two violations of NRC requirements were identified. In the first instance, NRC inspectors identified that the plant failed to properly implement the Technical Safety Requirements regarding the verification and operability of various safety systems for cascade cells prior to changing modes. In the second instance, the plant failed to provide adequate operator coverage at the X-330 Tails Station during a special plant evolution.

The violations are cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation (Notice) and the circumstances surrounding the violations are described in detail in the enclosed report. You are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. Your written response should address the procedure weaknesses and staff's lack of understanding of operability determination related to mode changes associated with the violations identified in the enclosed report. The NRC will use your response, in part, to determine whether further enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice" a copy of this letter, its enclosures, and your response will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR).

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J. Miller

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We will gladly discuss any questions you have concerning these observations.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by Gary L. Shear

Roy J. Caniano, Acting Director
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Docket No. 70-7002

Enclosures: 1. Notice of Violation
2. Inspection Report
No. 70-7002/97002(DNMS)

cc w/encls: R. M. DeVault, DOE
S. A. Polston, Paducah General Manager
D. I. Allen, Portsmouth General Manager
R. W. Gaston, Portsmouth Nuclear Regulatory
Affairs Manager
R. L. Woolley, Manager, Nuclear Regulatory
Assurance and Policy, USEC

bcc w/encls: A. B. Beach, RIII
H. B. Clayton, RIII
Office of Enforcement
J. Goldberg, OGC
E. Ten Eyck, FCSS
Y. H. Faraz, NMSS
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