January 14, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OF UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-00-001

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 II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility	Licensee Emergency Classification
U. S. Department of the Navy	Notification of Unusual Event
Crystal City, Virginia	Alert
License No: 45-23645-01NA	Site Area Emergency
Docket No. 030-29462	General Emergency
	X Not Applicable

Subject: RECENT MEDIA REPORTS ABOUT EVENT INVOLVING DEPLETED URANIUM AMMUNITION

On January 13, 2000, Region II received information from the Radiological Health Division, Puerto Rico Department of Health, on recent media reports regarding depleted uranium (DU) on Vieques Island in Puerto Rico. The articles referred to a February 19, 1999, event in which DU ammunition was inadvertently expended on the Live Impact Area of the Vieques Naval Range. The range is a naval weapons firing range. The NRC was initially informed of the event on March 5, 1999.

The newspaper articles reported that a nuclear engineer had conducted surveys for radiation on the island in the Live Impact Area and identified survey measurements up to 37 milliroentgens in areas where unauthorized individuals are located. The articles also reported this engineer had found radioactive contamination from the DU.

Region II is reviewing these concerns; Region II is also coordinating followup actions with the Radiological Health Division and the Navy.

This information is current as of January 14, 2000, at 3:00 pm.

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