

August 15, 2003

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE** PNO-II-03-015

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**

Department of the Navy  
Washington, DC

Dockets/License: 030-29462/45-23645-01NA

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

Notification of Unusual Event

Alert

Site Area Emergency

General Emergency

X Not Applicable

Subject: LOST STRONTIUM-90 SEALED SOURCE

On August 15, 2003, the Master Materials Licensee reported to the Headquarters Operations Center and Region II that on August 8, 2003, an IBIS (in-flight blade inspection system) used on helicopters was lost during flight. The IBIS device contained a strontium-90 sealed source with a maximum activity of 18.5 megabecquerels (MBq) (500 microcuries (uCi)). The dose rate from the source is 0.8 millirem per hour (mR/hr) at three inches while shielded (its normal position) and 75 mR/hr while extended (when the blade integrity is compromised). The device is normally a generally licensed device, however the licensee possessed this device under their specific license.

The device separated from the aircraft when a cowling detached and was lost approximately 17 miles northwest of New River, North Carolina. An airborne search of the area was unsuccessful.

Region II will continue to review the licensee's follow up to this event.  
The licensee and Region II notified the State of North Carolina about this event.

The information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 3:00 p.m. on August 15, 2003.

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