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Uranium Conversion/Enrichment - Current Issues (USA)

(last updated 26 Oct 2004)

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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
 In the Matter of LOUISIANA ENERGY SERVICES, LP
 Docket No. 70-3103-ML Official Edition No. 73
 OFFERED by: Applicant/Licensee Intervenor *NERS/PC*
 NRC Staff Other _____
 IDENTIFIED on _____ Witness/Panel *M. Sheehan*
 Action Taken: ADMITTED REJECTED WITHDRAWN
 Reporter/Clerk _____

General

> See also Regulatory Issues - USA

US DOC dumping case against Eurodif and Urenco

On Sep. 29, 2004, DOC amended the final results of the first antidumping duty administrative review of LEU from France, decreasing COGEMA/Eurodif's weighted-average margin from 5.43 percent to 4.56 percent.

Federal Register: September 29, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 188) p. 58128-58129 ([download full text](#))

On July 26, 2004, DOC finally determined that a weighted-average dumping margin of 5.43% (rather than 5.34% in the preliminary determination) exists for COGEMA/Eurodif for the period of July 13, 2001, through January 31, 2003.

Federal Register: August 3, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 148) p. 46501-46508 ([download full text](#))

On June 30, 2004, DOC finally determined ad valorem subsidy rates for Eurodif/COGEMA of 3.63 percent ad valorem for 2001, and 0.71 percent ad valorem for 2002.

Federal Register: July 7, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 129) p. 40871-40873 ([download full text](#))

On June 30, 2004, DOC finally determined ad valorem subsidy rates for Urenco Group of 1.57 percent

ad valorem for 2001, and 1.47 percent ad valorem for 2002.

Federal Register: July 7, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 129) p. 40869-40871 ([download full text](#))

On January 29, 2004, DOC preliminarily determined that the total estimated net countervailable subsidy rate for Eurodif is 6.54 percent ad valorem for 2001 and 3.03 percent ad valorem for 2002.

Federal Register: February 5, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 24) p. 5502-5505 ([download full text](#))

On January 29, 2004, DOC preliminarily determined that the total estimated net countervailable subsidy rate for Urenco Group Ltd. is 1.66 percent ad valorem for 2001 and 1.40 percent ad valorem for 2002.

Federal Register: February 5, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 24) p. 5498-5502 ([download full text](#))

On January 20, 2004, Department of Commerce issued a Notice of Preliminary Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review, indicating a Weighted-Average Margin for COGEMA/Eurodif of 5.34%.

Federal Register: January 27, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 17) p. 3883-3887 ([download full text](#))

On September 16, 2003, the U.S. Court of International Trade (CIT) found that DOC's Final Remand Determination of June 23, 2003, is unlawful and reversed it.

> [Download United States Court of International Trade Slip Opinion 03-121, USEC Inc. v. United States, 09/16/2003](#) (PDF)

On Mar. 25, 2003, the U.S. Court of International Trade (CIT) overturned Department of Commerce (DOC) decisions that the enrichers had violated U.S. trade laws in their sales of enrichment services in the U.S. The court vacated DOC's final determinations to slap duties on Urenco and Cogema SWU sales in the U.S. (Platts, Mar. 25, 2003)

> [Download United States Court of International Trade Slip Opinion 03-34, USEC Inc. v. United States, 03/25/2003](#) (PDF)

On Jan. 22, 2002, the US International Trade Commission approved 32.10 percent duties on enriched uranium imports from France while it approved 2.23 percent tariffs on enriched uranium from Germany, the UK, and the Netherlands. (AFX Jan. 22, 2002)

> [View US ITC vote \(Jan. 22, 2002\)](#)

On Dec. 14, 2001, the US Commerce Department found that French uranium enrichment company Eurodif, had sold its services in the US at almost 20 per cent below fair market price, but virtually cleared UK-based Urenco Group of dumping in the US market. (Financial Times Dec. 15, 2001)

Federal Register: December 21, 2001 (Volume 66, Number 246):

- [Notice of Final Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Low Enriched Uranium From France \(p. 65877-65886\)](#) • [United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands \(p. 65886-65889\)](#)
- [Notice of Final Affirmative Countervailing Duty Determination: Low Enriched Uranium From France \(p. 65901-65902\)](#) • [Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom \(p. 65903-65905\)](#)

Federal Register: January 3, 2002 (Vol.67, No.2), p.344-345:

- [Termination of investigations: Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom](#)

> [Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce](#)

Honeywell uranium conversion plant, Metropolis, Illinois

NRC License No. SUB-526, Docket No. 04003392

Honeywell Metropolis conversion plant shut down after UF6 leak

NRC cites Honeywell Metropolis uranium conversion plant for violations

After a thorough review, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has determined that two violations of NRC requirements occurred as a result of the uranium hexafluoride release at the Honeywell plant in Metropolis, Illinois, in late December 2003.

NRC inspectors found that Honeywell employees reconfigured the fluorination system without detailed instructions which allowed the leak to occur. During the event, the company also failed to implement some parts of its emergency response plan and did not provide sufficient information to local emergency responders.

> [View NRC release May 11, 2004](#)

NRC approves restart of Honeywell Metropolis uranium conversion plant (Illinois)

> [View NRC releases: Mar. 27, 2004](#) · [Apr. 14, 2004](#) · [Apr. 17, 2004](#)

Converdyn uranium conversion plant to resume operation after 3-month outage due to leakage

The Metropolis conversion facility is scheduled to restart operations during the week of 22 March 2004, according to ConverDyn. In a phased restart, front-end uranium hexafluoride (UF6) operations will begin first, followed by the restart of the remaining stages of the process, to be completed during the week of 29 March. The first full cylinders of UF6 are expected to become available during the week of 5 April. (WNA News Briefing 04:11, March 16, 2004)

UF6 leak at Honeywell Metropolis conversion plant entails another plant shutdown

*At approximately 2:24 a.m. (CST) there was a uranium hexafluoride (UF6) leak from a valve in their chemical process. The release was confirmed to have been terminated at approximately 3:20 a.m. (CST). Uranium hexafluoride is a hazardous chemical with low level radioactivity associated with the uranium component of the chemical.

Honeywell declared a site area emergency at 3:00 a.m. (CST). Fence line monitors indicated the possibility of a material release offsite. Local authorities evacuated approximately 25 people near the plant and approximately 75 people remained sheltered in their homes. Three individuals were taken to the hospital. Two of these individuals have been released. There were no injuries onsite. [...]" (NRC PNO-II-03-022, Dec. 22, 2003)

The NRC dispatched inspectors to the plant. In a Confirmatory Action Letter, NRC ordered Honeywell to shutdown the plant and perform an own investigation into the event. (NRC Release II-03-052, Dec. 23, 2003)

In its Inspection Report dated March 16, 2004, NRC identified two apparent license violations: the failure to have a procedure for the evolution of bringing two fluorinators online for dual operation, and the failures to properly maintain and implement aspects of the Radiological Contingency Plan.

> Download [NRC Inspection Report \(March 16, 2004\)](#) (PDF)

Converdyn uranium conversion plant shut down for incidents

Converdyn uranium conversion plant resumes operation

ConverDyn's Metropolis conversion facility resumed the production of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) on 18 November 2003, the company announced. Production will gradually increase and normal output rates are expected by mid-December. The facility has undergone significant repairs, retraining and a recertification programme due to recent incidents at the plant. (WNA News Briefing 03.47, Nov. 25, 2003)

Converdyn uranium conversion plant shut down for incidents

ConverDyn's Metropolis conversion facility experienced two unrelated plant incidents on 20 September, 2003, that have led to the temporary shutdown of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) production at the site. The plant is expected to restart in early October. (WNA News Briefing 03.38, Sep. 24, 2003)
The incidents included: a hydrofluoric acid (HF) spill on Sep. 9, 2003, an antimony pentafluoride (SbF₅) release on Sep. 12, 2003, and an uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) release from a cylinder pigtail on Sep. 30, 2003. Those incidents were subject to an NRC Inspection Report and Notice of Violation dated Dec. 17, 2003.

NRC accepts blending of CaF₂ waste to meet release criteria

By letter dated Sep 14, 2001, the NRC accepted a proposal by Honeywell to blend its calcium fluoride settling pond waste with natural fluorspar (CaF₂) to meet the uranium concentration criterion of 212 pCi/g (7.84 Bq/g; 313 ppm) for the unrestricted release of the material. The blended material is to be trucked to Hastie Trucking & Mining Company in Cave-In-Rock, Illinois, where it is to be manufactured into a fluorspar briquette for use as a fluxing agent in the steel industry. This arrangement evades the necessity to dump the waste material in a Texas landfill.

Missing shipment of uranium hexafluoride conversion waste

"MISSING SHIPMENT OF CaF SETTLING POND CLEANUP WASTE

A shipment of CaF settling pond waste left the site on July 25, 2001 and apparently did not arrive on July 27, 2001 at the Andrews County WCS in Texas. The shipment, one of several, consisted of 44,480 pounds [20.2 metric tonnes] of 80% CaF and 20% lime with less than 500 ppm natural uranium contained in it. The natural uranium is calculated at about 19 pounds [8.6 kg] total contained in the shipment. The driver reported that the shipment was delivered, but there is no paperwork to support the delivery. [...]

*** UPDATE ON 8/23/01 @ 1425 BY ROBERTS TO GOULD ***

Wills Trucking found the material intact on the ground on 8/22/01 north of Dallas, Tx. [...]"

(NRC Daily Event Report Aug. 24, 2001)

LES enrichment plant projects

> see extra page

USEC Paducah (Kentucky) and Portsmouth (Ohio) enrichment plants

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