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OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
RULEMAKINGS AND  
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

## Comments on National Source Tracking of Sealed Sources

(4)

I object to the proposed National Source Tracking of Sealed Sources as proposed in the July 28, 2005 federal register for several reasons.

- 1) There is no need for a national source tracking system for sealed sources. Sources to be covered under this regulation are already tracked by the respective NRC office or agreement state via licensing and inspection from cradle to grave. The licensees are required to inventory the material either semi annually or quarterly, or as described in their respective license. To add an additional layer of bureaucracy on top of that is redundant. Being there is no need for the database, it is a waste of money, whatever the source of the money is to be.
- 2) The NRC in their draft notice never explained how a national source tracking system will actually improve security of these materials. There is not a good explanation as to how the database will be used. Can the NRC give an example of how it will be used and when? I believe that having a central database, which could be hacked by a computer expert would provide a terrorist with a listing of all the large sources in the US; so I believe a national database actually reduces the national safety, not improves it.
- 3) The draft document also inappropriately references the IAEA Code of Conduct and suggests the IAEA in it is asking for more that is already done in the present US regulatory environment. In a review of the referenced documents, I believe the present US regulatory framework for licensing already meets the referenced requirements. I also believe without a good reason, the proposed regulation violates the Agreement between the agreement states and the federal government.
- 4) Concerning the total price of \$21 million dollars for the tracking system, nowhere is it stated where that money will come from, i.e., who will be paying for it. If there will be fees associated with this database, it should be spelled out now.
- 5) In reading over the document, I do not see a huge difference between how Category 1 and Category 2 sources are handled or accounted for. To what benefit is having the two categories, besides adding an unnecessary complexity to the regulation?
- 6) Ir-192, Se-75 and Yb-169 are all fairly short-lived radionuclides, making them difficult to track for the year. For instance, a radiographer purchases an Ir-192 source at 100 Ci, it will be below the 22 Ci Category 2 level in 162 days. I do not believe that tracking those short-lived sources nationally is prudent or practical.
- 7) I do not know the basis for the limits set forth in the Category table, the values seem random or arbitrary. Why 16 Ci for Americium and 5.4 Ci for Th-229? I

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have reviewed the IAEA Code of Conduct and related documents and do not see the basis for them in there either. Is a 20 Ci Ir-192 source not of interest to terrorists?

- 8) Plutonium is already accounted for and licensed separately as special nuclear material and a national database would be redundant.
- 9) Once set up, I believe there would be a tendency to start to include more and more sources in the database, lower the limit for the sources to be included. Is there a NRC plan to do that, such that at some time in the future all sources will be tracked no matter the size?
- 10) I am not sure of the practicality or necessity of tracking several of the isotopes mentioned. I cannot believe there are that many Th-229 or Cf-252 sources outside of the DOE that are greater than 5.4 Ci.
- 11) The majority of the sources that are stolen or lost every year are portable density gauges, which would be significantly below the limits set forth in the proposed regulation. The new regulation does nothing to help safe guard these sources, which seem to be at higher risk of theft.
- 12) There is a very fuzzy statement in the proposed wording about who will have access to the database: "NRC will be the database manager... however, the other agencies may become user of the system and have limited access." What other agencies? Who exactly will have access to this database and to what extent?
- 13) We hear in the news frequently of computer hackers gaining access to secure databases, credit card numbers, and personnel information. How will the database information be safe guarded?

**From:** Carol Gallagher  
**To:** Evangeline Ngbea  
**Date:** Tue, Aug 30, 2005 4:27 PM  
**Subject:** Comment on National Source Tracking of Sealed Sourced Proposed Rule

Attached for docketing is a comment letter on the above noted proposed rule from Bruce Busby that I received via the Rulemaking website on 8/30/05.

His address is:

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Carol

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