

May 18, 2006

Ms. Charlotte Engstrom
Vice President and General Counsel
General Atomics
P.O. Box 85608
San Diego, CA 92186-9784

SUBJECT: GENERAL ATOMICS - AMENDMENT 85, REQUEST TO RELEASE A
PORTION OF GENERAL ATOMICS' FACILITY TO UNRESTRICTED USE:
"NON-TRIGA REACTOR PORTION OF GENERAL ATOMICS' BUILDING 21
ROOF" (TAC L31933)

Dear Ms. Engstrom:

In accordance with General Atomics' (GA's) letter number 696-3957, dated February 6, 2006, and pursuant to Part 70 to Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Materials License SNM-696 is hereby amended to reflect the release of the "Non-TRIGA Reactor Portion of GA's Building 21 Roof." Safety Condition S-1 has been revised to include the date of February 6, 2006. All other conditions of this license shall remain the same.

This action closes TAC L31933.

Enclosed are copies of the revised Materials License SNM-696 (Enclosure 1) and the Safety Evaluation Report, which includes the Environmental Review (Enclosure 2).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Merritt N. Baker of my staff at (301) 415-6155 or via e-mail to mnbnrc@nrc.gov.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Sincerely,

/RA/

Gary S. Janosko, Chief
Fuel Cycle Facilities Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No.: 70-734
License No.: SNM-696
Amendment 85

Enclosures:

1. Materials License SNM-696
2. Safety Evaluation Report

cc: Mr. John Fassell
State of California
Department of Health Services
Radiologic Health Branch, Mail Stop 178
P.O. Box 94273
Sacramento, CA 95814-0208

Dr. Ron Rogus
State of California
Department of Health Services
Radiologic Health Branch, Mail Stop 178
P.O. Box 94273
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DOCKET: 70-734

LICENSEE: General Atomics
San Diego, CA

SUBJECT: SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT: REQUEST TO RELEASE A PORTION OF
THE GENERAL ATOMICS' FACILITY TO UNRESTRICTED USE: NON-TRIGA
REACTOR PORTION OF BUILDING 21 ROOF (TAC L31933)

1.0 BACKGROUND

By letter dated February 6, 2006 (ML060480152), General Atomics (GA) requested that the non-TRIGA reactor portion of the Building 21 roof be released to unrestricted use, and submitted the Final Radiological Survey Report, dated February 2006.

2.0 DISCUSSION

GA has continued to decontaminate and decommission its nuclear facilities and land areas in order to release them for unrestricted use, and submitted a final status survey of the 4,102 ft² roof area. The final status survey included ambient exposure rate measurements and laboratory analyses to verify that the areas meet the approved release criteria in the Site Decommissioning Plan, dated October 11, 1996.

The licensee recorded exposure rate measurements and collected tar and gravel samples. The average radionuclide concentrations in the tar and gravel samples were not discernable from normal background samples. The results of all surveys were less than the criteria in the Site Decommissioning Plan for unrestricted release, and were consistent with the results obtained by the inspectors.

Confirmatory surveys were performed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspectors on March 13-17, 2006, and were documented in Inspection Report 070-00734/06-001. Prior to conducting the confirmatory inspection, background measurements were taken of the roof of a non-impacted building. The inspectors compared the sample results with the licensee's acceptance criteria. Based on the measurements observed, the inspectors elected to not collect tar and gravel samples for analysis.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Release of this area does not affect the scope or nature of the licensed activity. 10 CFR 51.22 (c)(11) allows for a categorical exclusion if the following requirements have been satisfied:

- i There is no significant change in the types, or significant increase in the amounts, of any effluents that may be released offsite.
- ii There is no significant increase in the individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.
- iii There is no significant construction impact.
- iv There is no significant increase in the potential for, or no consequences from, radiological accidents.

There are no nuclear fuel manufacturing activities being conducted at GA, nor does GA still have such capabilities. GA's special nuclear material license, issued by the NRC, has been amended to authorize possession only. No fuel processing activities are authorized. Since there are no longer any radioactive liquid releases from this facility, there will be no significant increase in the possibility of an offsite release, and there will be no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Consequently, there is no significant increase in the potential for, or no consequences from radiological accidents. Release of the non-TRIGA portion of the Building 21 roof involves no construction activity. Therefore, there will be no construction impact.

The staff has determined that the proposed change does not adversely impact the public health and safety or the environment, and is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare a site-specific environmental assessment. Therefore, in accordance with 10 CFR 51.22(c)(11), neither an Environmental Assessment nor an Environmental Impact Statement is warranted for this action.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The NRC staff determined that the non-TRIGA portion of the Building 21 roof was surveyed and decommissioned in accordance with the approved Decommissioning Plan. Confirmatory surveys were performed by the NRC inspectors and the results meet the approved NRC release criteria. Therefore, the staff recommends approval of the amendment.

Region IV and the Division of Waste Management concur with this recommendation.

PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTOR

Merritt N. Baker