



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RHODE ISLAND ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Rhode-Island Nuclear Science Center
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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6/7/2007

Subject: Reply to Notice of Violation Dated 5/22/2007
Reference: NRC Routine Inspection Report No. 50-193/2007-201

The Assistant Director of Nuclear Operations has reviewed the referenced Inspection Report and the Notice of Violation. The past history of performing experiments under our general authorization (1008) was review from 1999- present. The method used to develop an experiment from first principle to an authorized user was also evaluated. The following is a result of this evaluation:

The reason for the violation: The RINSC staff was performing an experiment under a Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee approved authorization #1008 received a verbal approval from the SRO in the control room. The NSC-7a, Neutron Irradiation Request Form, Rev 9/94 requires an SRO to approve the irradiations. This sample irradiation was being performed under the 1008 authorization which was reauthorized 12/14/2006 by the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee. Therefore, the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee approved the experiment, but only a verbal approval was received from the SRO who was operating the reactor. The intent was to complete the paperwork (NSC-7a, Neutron Irradiation Request Form) after the completion of the 12-second proof of principle sample irradiation. The Reactor Logbook properly identified the irradiation of the samples, but a NSC-7a, Neutron Irradiation Request Form was never completed. This project was discussed with the Assistant Director, Reactor Supervisor and Health Physics well in advance of this experiment taking place.

There is a conflict between the procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities' and the NSC-7A Rev. 9/94. Procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities', requires that the Assistant Director approve each Irradiation Request Form, but the NSC-7A Rev 9/94 requires only an SRO to approve the Irradiation Request Form.

Corrective Steps that have been taken and the results achieved: Procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities', will be revised to bring it current with our present mode of operation. In addition to the Neutron Irradiation Request Form approval change, the requirement to have the Reactor Utilization Committee authorize experiments will also be changed to have the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee authorize experiments. The Reactor Utilization Committee and the Radiation Safety Committee were combined in 1996 to form the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee. The

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revised procedure will also clarify sample irradiations done under the general authorization for proof of principle type of work.

Subsequent sample irradiations for this experiment were performed under the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee approved authorization #1008. The NSC-7a, Neutron Irradiation Request Form was completed. Sample irradiation for this experiment will continue under authorization #1008 until proof of principle has been completed and a NSC-73 Rev 11/04, 'RINSC Facility Use Request Form' is completed and approved by the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee. Subsequent sample irradiations will then be done under the new authorization number.

Corrective Steps to avoid further violations: The RINSC staff was reminded of the need to have the proper paperwork approved in advance. Even the simplest task requires the paperwork to be completed before proceeding.

Procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities', will be revised and submitted for approval at next Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee meeting.

Date of Full compliance: RINSC will be in full compliance to both issues after the next Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee meeting. In advance of the approval from the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Committee of the revised procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities', a Memo and a marked up procedure #12, 'Use of Pneumatic Irradiation Facilities', will be presented to RINSC staff. The Memo will remind everyone to follow the marked up procedure and complete all required paperwork before proceeding.

The Inspection Report, Notice of Violation and this response will be reviewed at the next NRSC meeting as required by Tech Specs. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 401-789-9391.



Michael Middleton
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Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center

cc:

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