
Site Decommissioning Management Plan

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D. N. Fauver, M. F. Weber, T. C. Johnson, J. D. Kinneman

**Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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NUCLEAR METALS, INC.

Site Identification

Nuclear Metals, Inc.
Concord, MA

License No.:	SMB-179 SUB-1452
Docket No.:	040-00672 040-08866
License Status:	Timely renewal
Project Manager:	M. Miller, Region I
DWM Monitor:	W. Lahs

Status of Decommissioning Activities

License Nos. SUB-179 and SUB-1452 expired on May 31, 1989, and March 31, 1990, respectively, and both licenses are currently in timely renewal. Region I reviewed both renewal applications, and sent the licensee a deficiency letter on October 18, 1993. On January 11, 1994, Nuclear Metals, Inc. (NMI) submitted an environmental report to support preparation of the environmental assessment (EA) necessary for renewal of the licenses. The NMSS has contracted with ORNL to prepare the EA by November 1995.

On July 1, 1993, NMI submitted a letter to the NRC indicating that they planned to remediate the holding basin by processing its contents to recover and recycle the copper and depleted uranium. The licensee also submitted an amendment request dated July 1, 1993, seeking authorization under 10 CFR 20.2002 for unrestricted disposition of copper containing small quantities of DU. This proposal covers only copper generated during normal operations; however, at the time, NMI believed it might also be used to recycle material removed from the holding basin. It now appears that material from the holding basin will not be recycled.

On January 11, 1994, Region I sent NMI a deficiency letter regarding this proposal. Region I also sent a technical assistance request (TAR) to NMSS on January 21, 1994. NMI originally requested until July 1994 to respond, but now indicates that its response will not be available until summer of 1995. NMSS responded to the TAR on April 29, 1994. Region I reviewed the response, and delayed further action until NMI's intentions become clear.

Recently, licensee representatives indicated that they met with the Army to seek funding and direction regarding disposition of the holding basin contents. NMI expects an answer from the Army in the summer of 1995.

On February 12, 1993, the licensee submitted a holding basin characterization report. In response, Region I sent the licensee a letter, dated July 23, 1993, requesting additional information to justify the report's conclusion that depleted uranium is limited to the immediate environs of the basin. The licensee responded on January 6, 1994. Based on additional groundwater monitoring results, the licensee's response indicated that depleted uranium is migrating away from the holding basin toward the Assebet River, but has not migrated beyond the site boundary.

On March 24, 1995, Region I sent a letter to NMI approving the holding basin characterization report, and requesting a schedule for submitting a formal remediation plan including a schedule for implementation of the plan. Region I also requested additional information concerning the ground water.

On July 1, 1993, the licensee submitted a decommissioning funding plan for the site. Region I reviewed this plan, and sent a deficiency letter to the licensee on March 2, 1994. Region I received partial responses on April 15, 1994, and May 15, 1994, and determined that the information submitted was not adequate. Region I then issued a demand for information on June 21, 1994, and the licensee responded on July 1, 1994. Based on the response, Region I conducted an enforcement conference on December 8, 1994. By letter dated April 5, 1995, Region I informed NMI that, in order to achieve compliance, it must provide either a financial instrument described in 10 CFR 40.36, or a formal request for a partial exemption from 10 CFR 40.36.

In October 1994, a local citizens group published offsite soil sampling results indicating that uranium levels were elevated, but not above the criteria for release to unrestricted use. On November 16-17, 1994, Region I conducted an inspection at NMI, including independent soil sampling of offsite areas. The NRC soil sample results did not indicate depleted uranium above background level in the environment. Additional offsite sampling is planned. The concern about offsite contamination has also been referred to the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry for evaluation.

NRC/Licensee Actions and Schedule

- NRC responds to NMI's groundwater report October 1995
- NMI submits decommissioning plan and schedule December 1995
- NRC responds to NMI's environmental report December 1995
- NRC reviews NMI's decommissioning plan and schedule, and requests additional information June 1996
- NRC approves NMI's decommissioning plan and schedule December 1996

Problems/Issues

Uranium detected in onsite groundwater away from the holding basin may delay decommissioning activities or warrant additional action. The NRC has not yet approved a decommissioning financial assurance mechanism. NMI is currently seeking to have the U.S. Army assume financial responsibility for remediating the site.