U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
REGION V

Report No. 50-147/79-01

License No. 50-147 Priority CX-17 Category

Licensee: Rockwell International Corporation
Energy Systems Group
8900 DeSoto Avenue, Canoga Park, CA 91304

Facility Name: FCEL Facility
~~Canoga Park, California~~

Inspection at: ~~September 4-6, 1979~~

Inspection conducted:

Inspectors: for L. Wenslawski ~~J. R. Curtis, Radiation Specialist~~ 10/16/79
Date Signed

Date Signed

Date Signed

Approved by: H. E. Book ~~H. E. Book, Chief, Fuel Facility and~~ Materials Safety Branch 10/16/79
Date Signed

Summary:

Inspection on September 4-6, 1979 (Report No. 50-147/79-01)
Areas Inspected: A routine inspection was conducted to determine the physical status of the FCEL facility, examine various aspects of the surveillance program, and determine the licensee's timetable related to their dismantling plan. The inspection involved four inspection hours by one radiation specialist.

Results: No items of noncompliance were identified.

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DETAILS

1. Persons Contacted

*M. E. Remley, Manager, Health Safety and Radiation Services
R. E. Tuttle, Manager, Radiation and Nuclear Safety
*J. H. Walter, Manager, Santa Suzanna Site
M. Abbott, Health Physicist, Rockwell International
*H. Wieseneck, Director, Research & Engineering

*indicates present at the exit interview

2. Facility Status - Tour

The inspector toured the FCEL Facility. The components of the critical assembly machine are located in a normally locked building within a fenced enclosure. Portions of the building are actively in use by members of the Rockwell International instrumentation section. The FCEL facility is a large high bay room with 2 to 4 foot thick concrete walls. One-third of the floor space is occupied by the components of the critical assembly - one fixed and one moveable honeycomb structure with necessary supports, and a separate control rod drive mechanism. All of the fuel has been removed and returned to DOE or has been otherwise removed from the facility inventory.

The room has been used periodically for other purposes, taking advantage of the shielded walls and ability to isolate the room ventilation system that exist. At present non FCEL space is being used for boxed storage space.

The areas occupied by the FCEL components are separated from the periodic use area by rope barriers. Rockwell personnel who utilize the area are aware of the radiation levels and conditions in the room. Health physics surveillance is formally assigned and provided.

3. Radiological Control - Surveillance

The inspector discussed the radiological surveillance programs for the FCEL facility and examined associated records of surveys and results of integrating dosimeters (film badges) placed on the inside walls of the facility.

Quarterly radiation level and contamination surveys are conducted by the health physicist assigned to the building. The radiation levels around the FCEL components are in the 0.03 to 0.08 mR/hr range as reported from quarterly surveys using a Technical Associates CP6A ion chamber survey meter. A cobalt-60 calibration source that had been used in an adjacent area has been removed to another location; as a consequence localized levels up to 90 mR/hr no longer exist in the room.

Contamination levels, determined by swipe surveys are in the 0 to 50 dpm beta per 100 cm^2 area range. The last use of the FCEL was in November 1974.

4. Exit Interview

The scope and results of the inspection were discussed with the Director of Research and Engineering and the Manager of Health, Safety and Radiation Services. The status of the FCEL was discussed. The remaining components and the FCEL facility are presently covered by an NRC Dismantling Order (NRC letter dated November 1, 1974, Goller to AI). The physical status is as described in Section 2 of this report. At present, there is no timetable for dismantling the remaining FCEL components. The licensee's action on ultimate termination of this license is dependant whether AI management and a prospective recipient of the research apparatus arrive at an appropriate transfer arrangement and whether any prospective recipient would be able to arrange for NRC licensing. The licensee intends to maintain the facility in its present status, continuing the surveillance program until the facility is sold, transferred or a management decision is made to dismantle and dispose of the remaining components.