



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV  
URANIUM RECOVERY FIELD OFFICE  
BOX 25325  
DENVER, COLORADO 80225

DEC 21 1989

URFO:DLJ  
Docket No. 40-8681  
SUA-1358, Amendment No. 18  
04C08681320R

MEMORANDUM FOR: Docket File No. 40-8681

FROM: Dawn L. Jacoby  
Project Manager

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT NO. 18 TO SOURCE MATERIAL LICENSE SUA-1358;  
AUTHORIZATION TO DISCHARGE INTO CELL 4A

By letter dated December 20, 1989, Umetco Minerals Corporation (Umetco) requested authorization to stabilize the Cell 4A liner. Approval of Cell 4A has been delayed, and Umetco feared that the approaching winter winds and storms may damage the liner if it is not protected.

Background

A brief history of the approval delay of Cell 4A is discussed in the memorandum to Docket File No. 40-8681 dated November 28, 1989. No deficiencies with Cell 4A design remain except for upstream storm routing through Cell 1-I and Cell 3. Once the upstream ditches are enlarged and a method for determining an operating level for Cell 3 has been established, Cell 4A will be approved for use. It is anticipated by both the licensee and NRC that approval of Cell 4A will occur by February 1, 1990. Fearing damage to the unprotected liner, Umetco proposes to discharge process solutions into Cell 4A until about 1 foot of liquid covers the liner.

Discussion

To stabilize the liner, Umetco requested to discharge up to 750,000 gallons per day of process solutions into the cell. They indicated during a phone conversation on December 19, 1989, that the liner manufacturer strongly recommended that no further traffic be allowed on the liner, which eliminated the possibility of stabilizing the liner with sandbags, etc. Umetco also indicated that flooding the cell with fresh water was not an option, due to the lack of available water.

The potential risk and associated hazard of authorizing disposal into Cell 4A was discussed. It was determined that an insignificant increase in risk of

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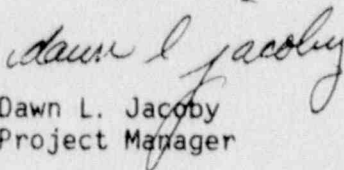
failure would result by allowing Umetco to discharge a minimal amount of solution into the cell, and that any such failure would be quickly identified by the leak detection system underlying Cell 4A. The major concern expressed was that by allowing the licensee to use Cell 4A, the incentive to get approval for the cell would be removed. It was agreed that the following stipulations would meet all objectives:

1. Only process water could be disposed of, no tailings. The maximum discharge rate would be limited to 750,000 gallons per day until March 1, 1990.
2. The Cell 4A leak detection system must be operational and monitored weekly.
3. If necessary, Cell 4A will be emptied.

#### Conclusion

Based on review of the licensee's December 20, 1989, submittal and subsequent staff discussions, it is recommended that Source Material License SUA-1358 be amended by adding License Condition No. 51(D) to read as follows:

51. D. Process solutions may be discharged into Cell 4A at a maximum rate of 750,000 gallons per day. Disposal of tailings is not authorized. The Cell 4A leak detection system shall be monitored weekly. At NRC's written notification, all solutions must be removed from the cell.

  
Dawn L. Jacoby  
Project Manager

Case Closed: 04008681320R

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