DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY ARMAMENT, MUNITIONS AND CHEMICAL COMMAND
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61299-6000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 5, 1990

AMSMC-SF

Mr. Darrel Wiedeman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region III
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Dear Mr. Wiedeman:

In response to the Confirmatory Action Letter, October 1, 1990, which requested a 30-day response of actions taken concerning the improper handling and disposal of promethium 147 activated low-level light antitank weapon sights at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the current status of those actions is as follows:

a. Conduct Appropriate Surveys. Radiological surveys consisting of meter readings, wipe tests, and soil analysis were performed at the Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities Recycling and Residue Yard by the Army contractor, Chem-Nuclear Systems, Incorporated. The contractor was on site September 27-28, 1990, to perform surveys and gather samples. The only detectable meter readings were taken directly on the sights. Wipe tests of the sights and soil samples from the suspected burial trenches and potential runoff areas are being analyzed and results will be provided no later than November 9, 1990. The United States Army Environmental Hygiene Agency performed similar radiological surveys October 15-18, 1990, with the addition of surveying the old Ammunition Supply Point residue yard and soak testing sights retrieved from Fort Bragg. These analysis results are not yet available, but meter readings were negative. All results will be forwarded as soon as they are available.

b. Develop Decontamination Plan. The decontamination plan is being developed by Chem-Nuclear Systems, Incorporated, and it will be forwarded by November 9, 1990. The scope of work and cost estimate for the remediation of the site are enclosed.

c. Evaluate Other Fort Bragg Sites for Improper Disposal. An investigation of this incident was performed to determine cause and prevent recurrence of similar incidents. The enclosed investigation report lists findings of deficiencies and recommendations. The report was forwarded to the Commander, Fort Bragg, requesting a response to the findings applicable to Fort

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Bragg. It was discovered that prior to the time the 8th Ordnance Company took control of the Ammunition Supply Point, the sights were removed before demilitarization and collected in ammunition cans. However, when the residue yard was moved from the Ammunition Supply Point to the Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities Recycling and Residue Yard in May 1989, those sights could not be accounted for. They were either buried with the other sights at the Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities Recycling and Residue Yard, are still stored somewhere in the Ammunition Supply Point, or were taken to one of the two landfills on post at Fort Bragg. The 8th Ordnance Company personnel involved in the burial of the sights were not aware of the location of these sights. Otherwise, Fort Bragg appeared to properly control and dispose of radioactive materials. Copies of radioactive shipment manifests generated at Fort Bragg dating back to 1985 were reviewed, and they indicated that other radioactive commodities used at Fort Bragg have been properly identified and disposed as radioactive waste.

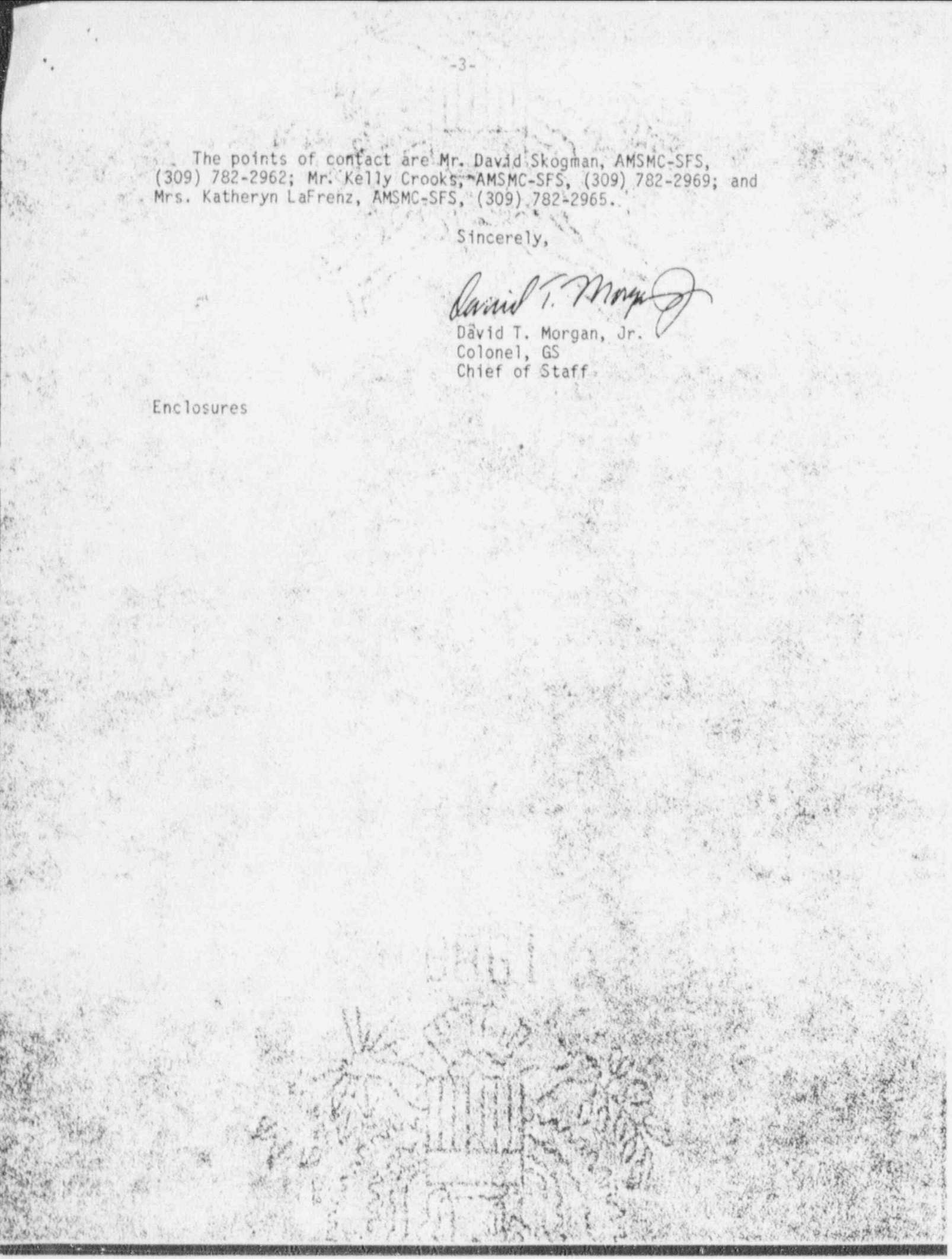
d. Evaluate Light Antitank Weapon Handling Procedures at Other Sites. Technical publications and Army regulations covering handling of the radioactive sights were reviewed and generally deemed adequate. However, the warnings contained in the Operator's Manual and Organizational Maintenance Manual were revised to better emphasize the presence of radioactive material and the associated precautions to users and maintenance personnel. These revised warnings are enclosed. In addition, the enclosed messages were disseminated to all units possessing light antitank weapon rockets requesting submittal of their handling procedures of expended light antitank weapon tubes. Of the installations that possess light antitank weapon rockets, only the Fort Carson Training and Audio-Visual Support Center was not aware of the requirement to remove the sights and dispose as radioactive waste. The Training and Audio-Visual Support Center had turned in about 200 expended launchers used for training to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office for disposal. Upon receipt of the message requesting evaluation of handling procedures, it was discovered the sights had not been removed. The sights are being removed at this time for disposition as radioactive waste.

e. Notify Users of Light Antitank Weapon Rockets of Fort Bragg Incident. The enclosed messages were disseminated to all installations that currently or potentially use, possess, or store light antitank weapon rockets. The messages described the incident at Fort Bragg and reiterated the proper handling and disposal procedures for radioactive light antitank weapon rocket sights.

The cleanup of the site is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about December 3, 1990, pending your approval of the decontamination plan.

The points of contact are Mr. David Skogman, AMSMC-SFS, (309) 782-2962; Mr. Kelly Crooks, AMSMC-SFS, (309) 782-2969; and Mrs. Katheryn LaFrenz, AMSMC-SFS, (309) 782-2965.

Sincerely,

David T. Morgan, Jr.
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

Enclosures