

Date: December 4, 1981

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-81-129

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by IE staff on this date.

Facility: Nuclear Metals, Incorporated  
Concord, Massachusetts 01742  
L/N SMB-179

Licensee Emergency Classification:  
\_\_\_\_ Notification of Unusual Event  
\_\_\_\_ Alert  
\_\_\_\_ Site Area Emergency  
\_\_\_\_ General Emergency  
X Not Applicable

Subject:

APPARENT OVEREXPOSURE TO AIRBORNE CONCENTRATIONS OF DEPLETED URANIUM

Nuclear Metals is licensed to process depleted uranium into kinetic energy penetrators for use by the military. This requires cutting, turning, extrusion, grinding and drilling of depleted uranium metal. Licensee urinalysis results indicate that an employee involved in grinding operations in April 1981 may have received an exposure to airborne depleted uranium in excess of the limits of 10 CFR 20.103. Uranium concentrations in urine as high as 935 micrograms per liter were detected at the time and the employee was temporarily removed from work involving the depleted uranium. A lung scan in October, 1981 indicated the presence of 8 milligrams of depleted uranium in the lungs. The exposed individual was examined by a physician shortly after the April incident and was given permission by the physician to return to work. The Regional office is now evaluating the bioassay data and may employ a medical consultant.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been notified. A press release will be issued when the occurrence of an overexposure is verified. There has been no media interest. The NRC learned of this incident during a safety inspection on December 1, 1981. The results of the inspection are being evaluated for enforcement action.



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DISTRIBUTION:

H. St. <u>11:00</u>	MNBB <u>11:02</u>	Phillips <u>11:10</u>	E/W <u>10:55</u>	Willste	Landow
Chairman Palladino	EDO	NRR	IE	NMSS	OIA
Comm. Gilinsky	AEOD			RES	
Comm. Bradford	PA	Air Rights <u>11:16</u>			MAIL:
Comm. Ahearne	MPA	SP		INPO <u>NA</u>	IE:TAS
Comm. Roberts	ELD			NSAC <u>NA</u>	ADM:Doc. Mgt. Br.
ACRS					
SECY	Regional Offices	<u>11-110</u>	<u>11-115</u>	<u>11-119</u>	<u>11-123</u>
CA					
				TMI Resident Section <u>11:25</u>	
				RI Resident Office <u>NA</u>	

Region I Form 83

(Rev. Oct. 16, 1981)

Destroyed previous edition

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