

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Hartsell S. Phillips

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IA 94-001

ORDER PROHIBITING INVOLVEMENT
IN NRC-LICENSED ACTIVITIES
(EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY)

I

Hartsell S. Phillips is employed by Logan General Hospital, Logan, West Virginia. Logan General Hospital (Licensee) holds License No. 47-19919-01 issued by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or Commission) pursuant to 10 CFR Parts 30 and 35. The license authorizes possession and use of byproduct material in accordance with the conditions specified therein. Mr. Phillips has been employed by the Licensee since approximately June 1991 as the Chief Technologist, Radiation Safety Officer (RSO), and Chairman of Radiation Safety Committee with responsibilities involving compliance with NRC requirements for radiation protection. Mr. Phillips was removed as Chairman of the Radiation Safety Committee on January 1, 1994, and removed as RSO on February 18, 1994. On February 22, 1994, the Licensee informed the NRC that it had suspended, subject to termination, Mr. Phillips on February 18, 1994, based on information the Licensee had received through interviews with its staff and other information developed by the Licensee.

On December 7-8, 1993, an NRC inspection was conducted at the Licensee's facility in Logan, West Virginia. As a result of information developed during that inspection, an investigation by the Office of Investigations (OI) was initiated in January 1994. Although this investigation is continuing, OI interviews of Licensee personnel and review of documents provided by OI reveal that nuclear medicine technologists under Mr. Phillips' supervision and at his direction, and Mr. Phillips himself, deliberately increased radiopharmaceutical dosages administered to patients above the dosages prescribed by the authorized user and set forth in the Licensee's procedures manual, and falsified the dosage records of those patients by making them appear as if the prescribed dosages had been administered. The OI interviews indicate that this practice of increasing dosages and of falsifying records continued for an extended period of time. The exact number of patients affected is not clear, but involved numerous administrations.

In addition, Mr. Phillips falsified records and directed nuclear medicine technologists under his supervision to falsify records relating to: training of nuclear medicine technologists, required by 10 CFR 19.12; daily dose calibrator constancy checks, required by 10 CFR 35.50(b)(1); daily and weekly surveys in nuclear medicine areas, required by 10 CFR 35.70(a), (b), and (e); and

surveys related to the receipt and shipment of licensed material, required by 10 CFR 20.205(d) and License Condition 16.

Specifically, these records indicated that the training, checks and surveys had been performed when in fact they had not been performed. The records falsification occurred for an extended period of time and may have been as long as 15 months during 1992 and 1993, and involved the falsification of records for surveys and training in nuclear medicine required during this period of time. The investigation also revealed that Mr. Phillips specifically instructed one nuclear medicine technologist to deny having falsified records and advised others to be untruthful when questioned by NRC inspectors.

III

Although the NRC investigation is continuing, based on the above, Mr. Phillips engaged in deliberate misconduct, a violation of 10 CFR 30.10, which caused the Licensee to be in violation of a number of NRC requirements including: (1) administration of radiopharmaceutical doses that differed from the prescribed doses, required by 10 CFR 35.25 and License Condition 16; (2) failure to provide training to nuclear medicine technologists, required by 10 CFR 19.12; (3) failure to perform the daily constancy checks of the dose calibrator, required by 10 CFR 35.50(b)(1); (4) failure to perform the required daily and weekly contamination and radiation surveys, required by

10 CFR 35.70(a), (b), and (e); (5) failure to perform the required surveys for radioactive material receipt, required by 10 CFR 20.205(d) and License Condition 16; and (6) failure to maintain accurate and complete records involving NRC-licensed activities (i.e., records of dose calibrator constancy checks (10 CFR 35.50(e)), radiation and contamination surveys (10 CFR 35.70(a), (b), and (h), and 10 CFR 20.401(b) and (c)), required by 10 CFR 30.9. Mr. Phillips also deliberately provided NRC inspectors information he knew to be inaccurate which was material to the NRC, also in violation of 10 CFR 30.10, which caused the Licensee to be in violation of 10 CFR 30.9.

As the RSO for the Licensee, Mr. Phillips was responsible, pursuant to 10 CFR 35.21(a), for ensuring that radiation safety activities were being performed in accordance with approved procedures and regulatory requirements, including the administration of radiopharmaceuticals, performance of required surveys, and keeping of required records which evidence compliance with Commission requirements. The NRC must be able to rely on the Licensee and its employees to comply with NRC requirements, including the requirement to provide information and maintain records that are complete and accurate in all material respects. Mr. Phillips engaged in deliberate misconduct, a violation of 10 CFR 30.10(a)(1), causing the Licensee to be in violation of NRC requirements, as noted above,

and submitted to the NRC information he knew to be incomplete or inaccurate, a violation of 10 CFR 30.10(a)(2).

Mr. Phillips' deliberate misconduct has raised serious doubt as to whether he can be relied upon to comply with NRC requirements and to provide complete and accurate information to the NRC. In addition, Mr. Phillips' deliberate misconduct caused this Licensee to violate numerous Commission requirements and his deliberate false statements to Commission officials demonstrate conduct that cannot, and will not, be tolerated.

Consequently, in light of the numerous violations caused by Mr. Phillips' conduct, the length of time the noncompliances existed, and the deliberate nature of Mr. Phillips' actions, I lack the requisite reasonable assurance that licensed activities can be conducted in compliance with the Commission's requirements and that the health and safety of the public would be protected if Mr. Phillips were permitted at this time to be involved in any NRC-licensed activities. Therefore, the public health, safety and interest require, pending further action by the NRC, that Mr. Phillips be prohibited from involvement in licensed activities. Furthermore, pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202, I find that the significance of the conduct described above is such that the public health, safety and interest require that this Order be immediately effective.

Accordingly, pursuant to Sections 81, 103, 161b, 161i, 182 and 186 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 2.202, 10 CFR 30.10, and 10 CFR 150.20, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, THAT:

Pending further action by the NRC, Hartsell S. Phillips is prohibited from participation in any respect in NRC-licensed activities. For the purposes of this paragraph, NRC-licensed activities include licensed activities of: 1) an NRC licensee, 2) an Agreement State licensee conducting licensed activities in NRC jurisdiction pursuant to 10 CFR 150.20, and 3) an Agreement State licensee involved in distribution of products that are subject to NRC jurisdiction.

The Director, Office of Enforcement, may, in writing, relax or rescind any of the above conditions upon demonstration by Mr. Phillips of good cause.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.202, Hartsell S. Phillips must, and any other person adversely affected by this Order may, submit an answer to this Order, and may request a hearing on this Order, within 20 days of the date of this Order. The answer may consent


to this Order. Unless the answer consents to this Order, the answer shall, in writing and under oath or affirmation, specifically admit or deny each allegation or charge made in this Order and shall set forth the matters of fact and law on which Hartsell S. Phillips or other person adversely affected relies and the reasons why the Order should not have been issued. Any answer or request for hearing shall be submitted to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Attn: Chief, Docketing and Service Section, Washington, DC 20555. Copies also shall be sent to the Director, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, to the Assistant General Counsel for Hearings and Enforcement at the same address, to the Regional Administrator, NRC Region II, Suite 2900, 101 Marietta Street, NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30323, and to Hartsell S. Phillips, if the answer or hearing request is by a person other than Hartsell S. Phillips. If a person other than Hartsell S. Phillips requests a hearing, that person shall set forth with particularity the manner in which his or her interest is adversely affected by this Order and shall address the criteria set forth in 10 CFR 2.714(d).

If a hearing is requested by Hartsell S. Phillips or a person whose interest is adversely affected, the Commission will issue an Order designating the time and place of any hearing. If a hearing is held, the issue to be considered at such hearing shall be whether this Order should be sustained.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202(c)(2)(i), Hartsell S. Phillips, or any other person adversely affected by this Order, may, in addition to demanding a hearing, at the same time the answer is filed or sooner, move the presiding officer to set aside the immediate effectiveness of the Order on the ground that the Order, including the need for immediate effectiveness, is not based on adequate evidence but on mere suspicion, unfounded allegations, or error.

In the absence of any request for hearing, the provisions specified in Section IV above shall be final 20 days from the date of this Order without further order or proceedings. AN ANSWER OR A REQUEST FOR HEARING SHALL NOT STAY THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS ORDER.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.
Deputy Executive Director for
Nuclear Materials Safety, Safeguards,
and Operations Support

Dated at Rockville, Maryland
this 10th day of March 1994

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