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March 28, 1994

Docket Nos. 030-04530
030-06923
EA No. 93-028

License Nos. 19-00915-03
19-00915-06

U. S. Department of Agriculture
ATTN: E. E. Finney, Jr.
Acting Administrator
Office of the Administrator
Agricultural Research Service
Administration Building
Washington, D. C. 20250

Dear Dr. Finney:

- Subject:
1. The "Assessment of the Radiation Safety Program at the U. S. Department of Agriculture" prepared by JUPITER Corporation
 2. Meeting at NRC Region I Office on February 1, 1994

A meeting was held on February 1, 1994 in the NRC Region I Office to discuss the results of the assessment of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Radiation Safety Program which was performed by Jupiter Associates and the development of the Performance Improvement Plan required by the Confirmatory Order issued to the USDA by the NRC on March 12, 1993. A list of meeting participants and a copy of the agenda are enclosed for your information.

The document "Assessment of the Radiation Safety Program at the U. S. Department of Agriculture" prepared by JUPITER Corporation and submitted to the NRC as required on January 14, 1994, was briefly discussed. The NRC has no objections to any of the recommendations made by JUPITER Corporation, and no additions. We understand that the USDA is developing the Performance Improvement Plan using this assessment for guidance.

A copy of a January 28, 1994 USDA memorandum describing the assignment of a committee to oversee development of the Performance Improvement Plan and a copy of their Action Plan was provided to the NRC during the meeting. A draft of the Performance Improvement Plan outline and one expanded section of the Performance Improvement Plan were reviewed during the meeting. The organization and level of detail in the Performance Improvement Plan appear adequate. We understand from this meeting that the USDA will prioritize the tasks described in the Performance Improvement Plan and establish dates for completion of the items. In addition, the USDA will continue to provide quarterly reports which describe

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U. S. Department of Agriculture completed tasks, and modifications of tasks and expected completion dates. We also agree that the Performance Improvement Plan is intended to be a flexible document, and do not expect to concur on modifications to this document. However, we expect that the quarterly summary will include a brief explanation of why modifications of tasks and extensions of time are necessary.

The effect of the Performance Improvement Plan on the current license renewal application was discussed. Both the broad scope license and the irradiator license have been in timely renewal since 1991, and review for both licenses is in progress. We agreed during the meeting that the USDA will continue to work with the NRC to complete the renewal process of these licenses during this year, concurrent with the development and implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan. Amendments to the renewed licenses can be made if required when the various tasks of the Performance Improvement Plan are completed over the next several years.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. If you have any additional questions, please contact Mohamed Shanbaky of my staff at 610-337-5209.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:
Charles W. Hehl

Charles W. Hehl, Director
Division of Radiation Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosures:

1. Meeting Participants
2. Meeting Agenda
3. USDA Memorandum dated January 28, 1994

cc:

Jane Giles, USDA, ARS

cc (cont'd):

U. S. Department of Agriculture
ATTN: John T. Jensen, Director
Radiation Safety Staff
6303 Ivy Lane
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770-1433

U. S. Department of Agriculture
ATTN: Lewis W. Smith, Chairman
Radiation safety Committee
Agricultural Research Service - Beltsville Area
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
Beltsville, Maryland 20705

JUPITER Corporation
ATTN: Clyde Jupiter
President
Suite 9000, Wheaton Plaza North
2730 University Boulevard West
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

bcc:

- Region I Docket Room (w/concurrences)
- J. Lieberman, OE
- J. Glenn, NMSS
- C. Hehl, RI
- S. Shankman, RI
- R. Bellamy, RI
- M. Shanbaky, RI
- M. Weber, NMSS
- E. Ullrich, RI

DRSS:RI
Ullrich/emm
2/17/94

DRSS:RI
Shanbaky
ms
3/28/94

DRSS:RI
Bellamy
3/8/94

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3/28/94

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Meeting with U. S. Department of Agriculture, February 1, 1994

NRC Participants

Charles W. Hehl, Director, Division of Radiation Safety and Safeguards (DRSS)
Susan Frant Shankman, Deputy Director, DRSS
Michael F. Weber, Acting Deputy Director, DRSS
Mohamed Shanbaky, Chief, Research and Development Section,
Nuclear Materials Safety Branch (NMSB), DRSS
Betsy Ullrich, Senior Health Physicist, Research and Development Section,
NMSB, DRSS

USDA Participants

Jane L. Giles, Deputy Administrator, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
Steve Edney, Management Analyst, ARS
and Executive Secretary, Radiation Safety Committee
Dr. Lewis Smith, ARS, Chair, Radiation Safety Committee
W. G. Horner, ARS, RSC member and
Chair of Performance Improvement Plan subgroup
John T. Jensen, ARS, Director, Radiological Safety Staff and
Radiation Safety Officer
Jack Patterson, ARS, Radiological Safety Staff and
Performance Improvement Plan subgroup member
Clyde Jupiter, JUPITER Corporation
Allen Brodsky, JUPITER Corporation

U. S. Department of Agriculture

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cc (cont'd):

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