



POLICY ISSUE

(NEGATIVE CONSENT)

*No objection.
See attached edicts.
E. McInnes
9/7/99*

August 23, 1999

FOR: The Commissioners
FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

SECY-99-215
RELEASED TO THE PDR
10/1/99 *DKW*
date initials

SUBJECT: REMOVAL OF THE PESSES/METALS COMPANY OF AMERICA SITE
FROM THE SITE DECOMMISSIONING MANAGEMENT PLAN

PURPOSE:

To inform the Commission that remediation has been completed at the Pesses/Metals Company of America (METCOA) site, in Pulaski, PA; and staff plans to release the site for unrestricted use, terminate the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license, and remove the site from the Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) list.

BACKGROUND:

In SECY-90-121, the original SDMP, and in subsequent revisions to the SDMP (SECY-91-096; 92-200; 93-179; 94-213; 95-209; 96-207; and 97-242), the staff identified approximately 50 sites that, because they met specific criteria (e.g., presence of large amounts of contaminated soil and potential contamination of groundwater or other environmental impacts), warranted NRC special oversight to ensure timely and safe remediation of residual radioactive material in excess of the current NRC criteria for release for unrestricted use. One of these sites is the Pesses/METCOA site.

CONTACT: M. Roberts, RI
610-337-5094
L. Camper, DWM/NMSS
301-415-7234

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PDR COMMS NRCC
CORRESPONDENCE PDR



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

Mr. Stephen D. Luftig, Director
Office of Emergency and Remediation Response
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Luftig:

This letter is to inform the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is preparing to authorize release of the building and land at the former Pesses/Metals Company of America (METCOA) site in Pulaski, Pennsylvania, for unrestricted use.

The staff is providing this information to EPA in accordance with NRC policy contained in the "Action Plan to Ensure Timely Cleanup of Site Decommissioning Management Plan Sites" (57 FR 13389), which states that NRC will inform EPA about specific decommissioning actions at Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) sites.

In 1975, the Atomic Energy Commission issued a license to The Pesses Company of Solon, Ohio, a metals and alloys producer, which used thorium scrap alloy (up to 2 percent thorium) as well as other metals in its manufacturing processes. Foundry work with licensed material was actually conducted at the company's facility in Pulaski, Pennsylvania. In September 1984, a routine NRC inspection found the Pulaski, Pennsylvania, facility unoccupied and apparently abandoned. The NRC subsequently found that The Pesses Company merged with its subsidiary, METCOA, Inc., and conducted licensed activities under this name. In approximately mid-1983, the licensee entered bankruptcy proceedings without the knowledge of the NRC.

From 1986 through 1990, NRC, EPA, and your contractors performed radiological and non-radiological assessments of the contaminants on the site and conducted stabilization actions to prevent erosion of materials. In 1997, a group of potentially responsible parties (the METCOA Settling Parties) signed a consent order to remediate the site. Because of the presence of significant quantities of non-radiological, hazardous wastes, EPA Region III staff took the lead responsibility for directly monitoring the cleanup actions.

Contractors for the METCOA Settling Parties remediated thorium and non-radiological hazardous material contamination on the site from October 1997 through mid-1998. Final *radiological* surveys *were made* by the contractor and confirmatory measurements were made by the NRC and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staffs in 1998 and early 1999. A total of 126 cubic meters (4500 cubic feet) of radioactive waste soil and slag were shipped to the ✓

Attachment 1



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

Conforming changes should be made
to attachments 3-5, so that
the text is the same as
applicable text in attach. 1.

Mr. Dennis Matlock
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region III Field Office
10 Chapline Street
Suite 401
Wheeling, WV 26003-2995

Dear Mr. Matlock:

This letter is to inform the ^{U.S.} Environmental Protection Agency, ^(EPA) Region III that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is preparing to authorize release of ~~land and~~ the building at the former Pesses/Metals Company of America (METCOA) site in Pulaski, Pennsylvania ^{and land} for unrestricted use. ^{split into 2 parts}

In 1975, the Atomic Energy Commission issued a license to The Pesses Company of Solon, Ohio, a metals and alloys producer, which used thorium scrap alloy (up to 2% thorium) as well as other metals in its manufacturing processes. Foundry work with licensed material was actually conducted at the company's facility in Pulaski, Pennsylvania. In September, 1984, a routine NRC inspection found the Pulaski, Pennsylvania facility unoccupied and apparently abandoned. The NRC subsequently found that The Pesses Company merged with its subsidiary, METCOA, Inc., and conducted licensed activities under this name. In approximately mid-1983, the licensee entered bankruptcy proceedings without the knowledge of the NRC.

From 1986 through 1990, NRC, EPA, and your contractors performed radiological and non-radiological assessments of the contaminants on the site and conducted stabilization actions to prevent erosion of materials. In 1997, a group of potentially responsible parties (the METCOA Settling Parties) signed a consent order to remediate the site. Because of the presence of significant quantities of non-radiological, hazardous wastes, EPA Region III staff took the lead responsibility for directly monitoring the cleanup actions.

Contractors for the METCOA Settling Parties remediated thorium and non-radiological hazardous material contamination on the site from October 1997 through mid-1998. Final ^{were made} radiological surveys by the contractor and confirmatory measurements were made by the NRC and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staffs in 1998 and early 1999. A total of 126 cubic meters (4500 cubic feet) of radioactive waste soil and slag were shipped to the Envirocare low-level waste site in Utah for disposal. Other wastes were disposed of at facilities in New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas, depending on the characteristics of the waste. Based on the METCOA Settling Parties' contractor's final surveys and the results of NRC and Pennsylvania DEP confirmatory surveys, NRC concludes that the site has been properly

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Attachment 2

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on the METCOA Settling Parties' contractor's final surveys and the results of NRC and Pennsylvania DEP confirmatory surveys, NRC concludes that the site has been properly remediated and now meets NRC criteria for unrestricted use.

Over the course of the Pesses/METCOA remediation project, we have very much appreciated the support and coordination provided by Mr. James Yusko, Mr. Roy Woods, and radiation protection staff from the DEP's Southwest Regional Office. Without ~~this~~ support this project could not have been successfully completed.
their ✓

If you have any questions, please contact the NRC project manager, Mr. Mark C. Roberts, at

(610) ↑
337-5094.

Sincerely,

Ronald R. Bellamy, Chief
Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Docket No. 040-08406
License No. STB-1254

cc:

J. Yusko, Pennsylvania DEP
R. Woods, Pennsylvania DEP
H. Wein, METCOA Settling Parties

Attachment 3



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

METCOA Settling Parties
c/o Mr. Howard Wein, Esq.
Klett, Lieber, Rooney & Schorling
One Oxford Centre
40th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Wein:

This letter is to inform the METCOA Settling Parties that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is preparing to authorize release of land and the building at the former Pesses/ Metals Company of America (METCOA) site in Pulaski, Pennsylvania^y for unrestricted use. ✓

From 1997 to 1999, contractors representing the METCOA Settling Parties performed remediation and surveys at the former Pesses/METCOA site in Pulaski, Pennsylvania. The site was remediated in accordance with criteria specified in the "Action Plan for Ensuring Timely Cleanup of Site Decommissioning Management Plan Sites" (Action Plan) (57 FR 13889). U.S. NRC inspectors and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staff observed the contractors' remediation and final radiological survey activities. NRC and Pennsylvania DEP inspectors also performed independent confirmatory surveys. Based on the contractor's final surveys and the results of NRC and Pennsylvania DEP confirmatory surveys, NRC concludes that the site has been properly remediated and now meets NRC criteria for unrestricted use as provided in the Action Plan. NRC will also terminate the license.

As provided in the Action Plan, this is the final action regarding the former Pesses/METCOA site. NRC will not require any additional decommissioning, in response to future NRC criteria or standards, unless additional contamination or noncompliance with remediation commitments is found, ^{De} ~~indicating~~ ^{that indicates} a significant threat to public health and safety. ✓

Over the course of the Pesses/METCOA remediation project, we have very much appreciated the support and coordination provided by your contractors' staffs. Without ^{the} ~~this~~ support this project could not have been successfully completed. ^{their} ✓