



26 November 1999

Barry Mendelsohn
Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T-8H7
Washington, DC 20555
(301) 415-7262

Dear Mr Mendelsohn,

The Australian Safeguards and Non-proliferation Office is the Australian authority responsible for regulating physical protection measures for nuclear material and nuclear facilities. As you are no doubt aware the IAEA issues guidelines (Infcirc 225) for States to implement physical protection measures for nuclear material. The last few revisions and in particular rev.4 cover confidentiality of physical protection related information. In order to fully implement the recommendations of Infcirc225 Rev4 we are considering establishing guidelines for classification of documents relating to nuclear facilities that we would provide to our permittees. We would primarily be aiming to protect information that may be useful to a potential thief or saboteur.

It would be helpful to us when establishing these guidelines to investigate similar guidelines prepared by other States. I understand the U.S. has various classification guidelines covering a range of different facilities. We would greatly appreciate copies of any classification guides you could provide us covering research reactors, other research facilities using nuclear material, enrichment facilities and uranium mines. Guides for conversion facilities and power reactors might also be useful as they handle similar materials (such as uranium ores and concentrates and fresh and irradiated fuel). I presume these are guidelines NRC licenced facilities should refer to when preparing documentation, does the DOE have similar classification guides for their facilities?

We understand that interpretation of Infcirc 225 is a matter for individual States and that your practices may not be directly applicable here, and may well differ from other State's practices. However, any information we can gather from other States will both assist us in developing our own interpretation and hopefully lead to at least some basic level of compatibility between States. In relation to enrichment plants we are particularly concerned to ensure our guidelines are compatible with yours given the close cooperation on laser enrichment expected between our countries when the Silex agreement enters into force, and the need to protect this potentially sensitive technology.

Please contact me (Tel: +61 2 6261 1904, Fax: +61 2 6261 1908, e-mail: nick.doulgeris@dfat.gov.au) if you need any additional information.

Yours sincerely

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