

HHS Designation of Additional Members of the
Special Exposure Cohort
under the
Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000

Designating a Class of Employees from
General Electric Company
Evendale, Ohio



I. Designation

I, Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, designate the class of employees defined in Section II of this report for addition to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), as authorized under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA), 42 U.S.C. § 7384q.

August 31, 2011
Date

_____[Signature on file]_____
Kathleen Sebelius

II. Employee Class Definition

All employees of the Department of Energy, its predecessor agencies, and their contractors and subcontractors who worked at General Electric Co. in Evendale, Ohio, from January 1, 1961 through June 30, 1970, for a number of work days aggregating at least 250 work days, occurring either solely under this employment or in combination with work days within the parameters established for one or more other classes of employees included in the Special Exposure Cohort.

III. Designation Criteria and Recommendations

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7384q, for the class defined in Section II of this report, the Secretary has determined, and the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (Board) has recommended, that

- (1) it is not feasible to estimate with sufficient accuracy the radiation dose that the class received; and
- (2) there is a reasonable likelihood that such radiation dose may have endangered the health of members of the class.

The SEC final rule states in 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(1) that it is feasible in two situations to estimate the radiation dose that the class received with sufficient accuracy. First, the rule states that radiation doses may be estimated with sufficient accuracy if NIOSH has established that it has access to sufficient information to estimate the maximum radiation dose for every type of cancer for which radiation doses are reconstructed that could have been incurred under plausible circumstances by any member of the class. Alternatively, radiation doses may be estimated with sufficient accuracy if NIOSH has established that it has access to sufficient information to estimate the radiation doses of members of the class more precisely than a maximum dose estimate.

The Board, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7384q, advised the Secretary to designate the class as an addition to the SEC in a letter received by the Secretary on August 1, 2011.

IV. Designation Findings

Feasibility of Estimating Radiation Doses with Sufficient Accuracy

The Secretary established the feasibility determination for the class of employees covered by this report based upon the findings summarized below.

- NIOSH determined that members of the class evaluated may have received internal and external radiation exposures to uranium, thorium, and fission product radionuclides during operations such as high-temperature testing of refractory metals and alloys, reactor components, and fuel element materials, as well as the treatment of thorium-oxide in high-temperature furnaces.
- NIOSH obtained source term information for some specific projects or experiments, but lacks the specific information from which to identify the operations with the highest exposure potential. This lack of needed specific information also applies to the majority of workplace monitoring and source term information obtained by NIOSH, which pertains to periods outside the 1961-1970 Atomic Energy Commission operations period being evaluated. NIOSH has not identified sufficient documentation to define and quantify the total source term.
- NIOSH obtained uranium urinalysis results for 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1970; and has obtained thorium urinalysis results for 1965, 1966, and 1967. NIOSH has determined that the bioassay data are insufficient for development of coworker dose distributions for the years with no data. NIOSH has found no fission product bioassay monitoring data for the period from January 1, 1961 through June 30, 1970.
- NIOSH lacks sufficient information, which includes biological monitoring data, sufficient air monitoring information, and sufficient process and radiological source information, to allow it to estimate with sufficient accuracy the potential internal and external exposures to uranium, thorium, and fission product radionuclides for individuals employed at General Electric Company (Ohio) during the period from January 1, 1961 through June 30, 1970.
- NIOSH has obtained individual external monitoring data for approximately eleven percent of the claims referred to NIOSH for dose reconstruction. NIOSH has found insufficient external monitoring data to allow for estimation of external dose for unmonitored energy employees.
- Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(1), NIOSH determined that there is insufficient information to either: (1) estimate the maximum radiation dose, for every type of cancer for which radiation doses are reconstructed, that could have been incurred under plausible circumstances by any member of the class; or (2) estimate the radiation doses of members of the class more precisely than a maximum dose estimate.

- NIOSH finds that reconstruction of medical dose is likely to be feasible by using claimant-favorable assumptions in the Technical Information Bulletin, *Dose Reconstruction from Occupationally Related Diagnostic X-Ray Procedures* (ORAUT-OTIB-0006).
- Although NIOSH found that it is not possible to completely reconstruct radiation doses for the proposed class, NIOSH intends to use any internal and external monitoring data that may become available (and that can be interpreted using existing NIOSH dose reconstruction processes or procedures) for an individual claim. Therefore, dose reconstructions for individuals employed at General Electric Company (Ohio) during the period from January 1, 1961 through June 30, 1970, but who do not qualify for inclusion in the SEC, may be performed using these data as appropriate.
- The Board concurred with the NIOSH evaluation and recommended the proposed class for addition to the SEC.

Health Endangerment

The Secretary established the health endangerment determination for the class of employees covered by this report based upon the findings summarized below.

- (1) Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(3), NIOSH established that there is a reasonable likelihood that such radiation doses may have endangered the health of members of the class. Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(3)(ii), NIOSH specified a minimum duration of employment to satisfy this health endangerment criterion as “having been employed for a number of work days aggregating at least 250 work days within the parameters established for this class or in combination with work days within the parameters (excluding aggregate work day requirements) established for one or more other classes of employees in the Cohort.”
- (2) NIOSH did not identify any evidence from the petitioners or from other resources that would establish that the class was exposed to radiation during a discrete incident likely to have involved exceptionally high-level exposures, such as a nuclear criticality incident, as defined under 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(3)(i).
- (3) The Board concurred with NIOSH’s finding that the health of the class may have been endangered and defined the class according to the 250-work day requirement specified under 42 C.F.R. § 83.13(c)(3)(ii).

V. Effect and Effective Date of Designation

The Secretary submits this report on the designation of one additional class to the SEC for review by Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 7384(14)(C)(ii) and 7384q(c)(2)(A), as amended by the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Pub. L. No. 108-375 (codified as amended in scattered sections of 42 U.S.C.). Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7384(14)(C)(ii), as

amended by the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Pub. L. No. 108-375 (codified as amended in scattered sections of 42 U.S.C.), the designation in this report will become effective 30 days after the date of this report's submission to Congress "unless Congress otherwise provides."

VI. Administrative Review of Designation

The health endangerment determination of the designation provided in this report may be subject to an administrative review within HHS, pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 83.18(a). On the basis of such a review, if the Secretary decides to expand the class of employees covered by this designation, the Secretary would transmit a supplementary report to Congress providing the expanded employee class definition and the criteria and findings on which the decision was based.