

Glossary of Terms



This booklet contains terms commonly used
in the Energy Employees Occupational
Illness Compensation Program.



Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

NIOSH

For more information about the Energy Employees
Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act, or the
NIOSH dose reconstruction program, please contact NIOSH.

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As your claim moves through the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program, you will likely hear the terms listed in this booklet. Commonly used words, phrases, or acronyms are in bold and a brief explanation follows. The terms are listed in alphabetical order.

Act— The law that established a compensation program for energy workers who became ill from exposure to radiation, beryllium, silica, or other toxic substances while working for the Department of Energy or some of its contractors and subcontractors. The official name of the law is the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000. It was passed in December of 2000.

Activity Report— A report sent to claimants undergoing dose reconstruction with NIOSH. The report includes claim status information and is mailed in January and July.

Administratively Closed— The closure of a claim by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or the Department of Labor (DOL) before a compensation decision is made by DOL. For example, a claim could be administratively closed if the claimant does not sign and return the OCAS-1 Form to NIOSH within 60 days of receiving it. In this example, the claim can be reopened once the form is signed and returned.

Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (the Board)— A Federal advisory committee established under the Act. The Board was appointed by the President of the United States to advise the Department of Health and Human Services and NIOSH on their activities conducted under the Act. The Board advises NIOSH on dose reconstructions and Special Exposure Cohort petitions.

“At least as likely as not”— The legal phrase used under the Act to indicate whether a claimant will receive compensation. It is used to state whether an energy worker’s cancer was likely caused by his/her workplace exposure to radiation. Example: “An energy worker’s cancer is ‘at least as likely as not’ caused by his/her workplace radiation exposure.” This means that there is at least a 50% possibility that the worker’s cancer was caused by radiation exposure while working at a covered nuclear facility.

AWE— Atomic Weapons Employer. A term used under the Act that means an entity, other than the United States government, that: (1) processed or produced material that released radiation and was used in the production of an atomic weapon for the United States, excluding uranium mining and milling; and (2) is designated by the Secretary of Energy as an atomic weapons employer for purposes of the Act.

CATI— Computer Assisted Telephone Interview. A voluntary telephone interview conducted before the dose reconstruction begins. The interview provides the claimant with an opportunity to share any information he/she thinks might be relevant to the dose reconstruction (i.e., experiences that may have resulted in radiation exposure). Prior to the interview, the claimant receives a packet of information from Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU). This packet includes a list of interview questions to help the claimant prepare.

Claimant— An individual who filed a claim and is seeking compensation under the Act; either an energy worker or a survivor of an energy worker.

Claimant Favorable Assumptions— Refers to the dose reconstruction procedures used by NIOSH in cases where scientific information is lacking or unavailable and a decision is needed on how to handle this missing information. Claimant favorable assumptions indicates that the higher radiation dose values are given to the energy worker when the scientific information shows a variety of values that are equally possible.

Closeout Interview— A scheduled interview conducted by ORAU after the claimant receives a copy of the draft dose reconstruction report. The purpose of the interview is to review the draft report. It is also an opportunity for the claimant to provide any additional relevant information that may affect the dose reconstruction or indicate that he/she is in the process of obtaining such information.

DOE— Department of Energy. Under the Act, DOE is the Federal agency responsible for providing exposure monitoring records to DOL and NIOSH. These records are used as a starting point to help determine the amount of radiation an energy worker likely received in the workplace. DOE also identifies and recommends to DOL which nuclear facilities should be covered under the Act.

DOL— Department of Labor. Under the Act, DOL is the Federal agency responsible for overseeing the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program and making all compensation decisions. DOL processes and reviews each claim to determine if it meets the requirements for further evaluation. If the energy worker meets the requirements and was diagnosed with cancer, then DOL sends the claim to NIOSH for dose reconstruction.

Dose Reconstruction (DR)— The scientific method NIOSH uses under the Act to determine the amount (dose) of radiation an energy worker likely received while working at a DOE or AWE facility. DOL uses the dose reconstruction results to determine whether the energy worker's cancer was "at least as likely as not" caused by workplace exposure to radiation and therefore, whether the claim should be compensated. Dose reconstruction began in the late 1970s and is a widely accepted practice used within the expert scientific community.

EEOICPA— Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000. This law was passed in December of 2000. It is intended to compensate energy workers, or their survivors, who became ill from workplace exposures to radiation, beryllium, silica, or other toxic substances and worked at designated DOE or AWE facilities involved in nuclear weapons production activities. DOL oversees the entire compensation program (Part B and Part E) and makes all compensation decisions. This law is also referred to as the Act.

Final Adjudication— A legal term used under the Act when referring to the final compensation decision for a claim. All final compensation decisions are made by DOL.

Health Physicist (HP)— An expert in the areas of radiation protection and the health effects of radiation exposure. Health physicists conduct dose reconstructions as part of this compensation program.

NIOSH— National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Under the Act, NIOSH is the Federal agency responsible for conducting dose reconstructions for energy workers who have developed cancer, possibly as a result of radiation exposure they received while conducting nuclear weapons production activities at certain DOE or AWE facilities. NIOSH is also responsible for evaluating petitions that are filed by persons seeking to become part of the Special Exposure Cohort. NIOSH is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Department of Health and Human Services.

OCAS— Office of Compensation Analysis and Support. The office within NIOSH that is responsible for conducting dose reconstructions, handling Special Exposure Cohort petitions, and managing the overall dose reconstruction program.

OCAS-1 Form— A form NIOSH sends to all claimants with their draft dose reconstruction report. Claimants must sign and return this form to NIOSH before the final dose reconstruction report can be sent to DOL for a compensation decision. The claimant has 60 days from the time he/she receives the form to sign and return it to NIOSH. Otherwise, NIOSH may administratively close the case. Signing this form does not mean that the claimant agrees or disagrees with the results of the dose reconstruction. It only confirms that the claimant does not have any additional information to share with NIOSH at the time the form is signed. The OCAS-1 Form is titled, “Statement by the Claimant Closing the Record on a Dose Reconstruction Under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act.”

ORAU— Oak Ridge Associated Universities. An independent contractor working with NIOSH to collect exposure records from DOE, complete dose reconstructions, conduct telephone interviews, and assist in Special Exposure Cohort petition evaluations under Part B of the Act.

Part B— Under the Act, Part B covers illnesses from workplace exposure to radiation, beryllium, and silica. Under Part B, NIOSH is responsible for conducting dose reconstructions for energy workers who were possibly exposed to radiation at work and developed cancer. Under Part B, DOL is responsible for cases involving energy workers who possibly developed illnesses from workplace exposure to beryllium and silica.

Part E— Under the Act, Part E covers illnesses from workplace exposure to any toxic substance. DOL is responsible for all claims filed under Part E.

Period of Covered Employment— A phrase used under the Act that refers to the years of employment eligible for evaluation. Facilities and time periods covered by the Act are designated by DOE and DOL based on the activities conducted at each nuclear facility.

Primary Cancer— A cancer diagnosed at the place in the body where it began. The cancer is often named after that area of the body and is used when completing the dose reconstruction.

Probability of Causation (POC)— The likelihood (expressed as a percentage between 0% and 100%) that an energy worker’s cancer was caused by workplace exposure to radiation. DOL uses the completed dose reconstruction to determine the claimant’s POC percentage, which is then used to determine whether the claim qualifies for compensation.

Public Health Advisors (PHA)— An individual who is responsible for advising claimants about their Part B claims while their claims are with NIOSH for dose reconstruction. The primary roles of a Public Health Advisor are to manage the progress of claims, respond to claimant questions, comments, or concerns, and make any necessary contact with DOL about a claim while it is with NIOSH.

Secondary Cancer— A cancer that spreads from its origin to another area of the body.

Site Profile— A document that contains information about a facility’s general activities and radiation protection practices (i.e., frequency of badge exchange, types of radiation exposure monitored, medical exposure information). Site Profiles may be used by NIOSH when completing dose reconstructions to further understand or add to the personal exposure information for a particular claim; however, they are not always required to complete a dose reconstruction. Site Profiles are “living documents” and can be updated at any time as relevant information becomes available. If a Site Profile is revised at any time, previous non-compensable dose reconstructions will be reviewed to see if the revision affects the outcome of the claim. If it does affect the outcome, the dose reconstruction will be revised.

Special Exposure Cohort (SEC)— A group of energy workers who do not undergo dose reconstruction because they meet specific criteria outlined in the Act: a) have at least one of 22 specified cancers, b) worked at a facility covered under the Cohort, and c) worked for a specified amount of time. Workers may be added to the SEC if it is determined that 1) they were likely exposed to radiation at a nuclear facility, but it is not possible to estimate the amount of radiation the workers received with sufficient accuracy, and 2) there is a reasonable likelihood that the amount of radiation they received may have endangered their health. DOL determines whether an individual qualifies for compensation as part of the SEC.

Special Exposure Cohort Petition Counselor— A specific individual at NIOSH responsible for providing advice to individuals interested in submitting an SEC petition. The SEC Counselor will assist petitioners in understanding the development, submission, qualification, evaluation, and the Board’s deliberation processes that their petition will undergo. If you are interested in filing an SEC petition or have questions about the petitioning process, contact the Counselor toll-free at 1-800-356-4674; directly at 513-533-6800; or email ocas@cdc.gov.

Tracking Number— A number assigned to a claim that allows NIOSH to easily access and follow each claim as it moves through the dose reconstruction process. Tracking numbers are assigned in the order NIOSH receives the claim from DOL.

