



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Meeting Date:

August 8, 2006, 2:15 p.m.

Meeting with:

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local Lodge 2401, West Valley, New York

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Ronald S. Buczak, President	International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local Lodge 2401
Frank Heinen	IAM Local Lodge 2401
Mike Atkins	IAM Local Lodge 2401
Dave Hawkins	IAM Local Lodge 2401
David Miller	IAM Local Lodge 2401
Steve Krezmien	IAM Local Lodge 2401
John Piticco	IAM Local Lodge 2401
Peter B. Cooney	IAM Local Lodge 2401
James R. Barnhart	IAM Local Lodge 2401
William R. Dallas	IAM Local Lodge 2401
Ed Kuss, Business Representative	IAM District 65

NIOSH/ORAU Team:

Robert "Bob" Burns, Shonka Research Associates, Inc., Site Profile Team Leader

Mark Lewis, Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International, Inc. (ATL)

Mary Elliott, ATL

Proceedings:

Mark Lewis opened the meeting at approximately 2:15 p.m. He thanked the attendees for taking the time to meet with the Worker Outreach Team from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Dose Reconstruction Project. Mr. Lewis introduced Mr. Bob Burns, the Site Profile Team Leader for the West Valley Demonstrate Project, and Ms. Mary Elliott, who produces minutes of the Worker Outreach meetings.

Mr. Lewis stated that the Team was present to request worker input for the West Valley Demonstration Project Site Profile. This is a tool used to help in reconstructing radiation doses for workers and former workers from the site who file claims under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). The West Valley Site Profile will



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

provide a consistent framework of information for dose reconstruction for claimants from the West Valley Site. Mr. Lewis indicated that Mr. Burns would talk about both the Site Profile and the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act in greater detail.

Mr. Lewis described his background as a union worker within the nuclear weapons complex. He served as his local union's health and safety officer, which prompted his involvement in the union effort for the passage of the EEOICPA. These experiences led to his current position as the Union Outreach Specialist on the NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project, serving as a liaison between organized labor and the teams who write the site profiles and perform EEOICPA radiation dose reconstructions.

Mr. Lewis requested permission to record the meeting, explaining that the recording helps Ms. Elliott in preparing an accurate account of the meeting. He requested that everyone sign in on the sheet provided so that the names of the attendees could be included in the minutes. The minutes are sent to NIOSH for publication on its Web site after the union has had a chance to review them.

Mr. Lewis explained that it is important to hear the "rest of the story" because much of the information included in a Site Profile is based on the "official" records of DOE and its contractors. Ideally, this is done by reaching out to the workers – the true "site experts" – to include their perspectives on actual daily work procedures, safety programs, and incidents or accidents affecting a large worker population. Special interviews can be arranged for anyone who has a concern about disclosing classified information.

Mr. Lewis stated that the NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project has a Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy that prevents anyone who worked at the site from being the site profile document owner or performing a dose reconstruction for a claim of a worker from the site.

Mr. Lewis turned the meeting over to Mr. Bob Burns for the presentation. Mr. Burns explained that the purpose of the meeting is to include the workers from the West Valley Site in the Site Profile development process. Mr. Burns asked the attendees "What would you want me to know about your site as I put the Site Profile together?"

Mr. Burns gave a brief overview of EEOICPA, which is a federal law passed in 2000 to provide compensation to workers who became ill as the result of their exposure to ionizing radiation or toxic substances during their employment in the DOE nuclear weapons and energy research programs. More information about EEOICPA and dose reconstruction can found on the NIOSH Web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ocas>.

Employees or former employees who worked for facilities or companies under contract with DOE or its predecessors can file Subtitle B claims for \$150,000 and reimbursement of eligible medical expenses for cancers, beryllium disease, and some silicosis cases. Other parts of the law cover illnesses resulting from toxic chemical exposure in the workplace, and people should contact the Department of Labor for more information regarding that part of the program. Surviving spouses or children may also file a claim on the worker's behalf if the worker is deceased.

When an EEOICPA claim is filed, the Department of Labor (DOL) verifies the worker's employment and medical diagnosis. The DOL forwards cancer claims requiring radiation dose reconstruction to the NIOSH Office of Compensation Analysis and Support (OCAS). NIOSH



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

has contracted with the Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) Team to assist with the dose reconstructions and other associated tasks, including Site Profile development.

The NIOSH/ORAU Team performs the dose reconstructions to determine the probability of causation (POC), or the likelihood that the cancer was caused by the worker's occupational exposure to ionizing radiation. The Team begins the dose reconstruction process with a telephone interview with the claimant to gather the worker's personal information and work history. The dose reconstructor enters the information from the interview and any available dose records for the worker into a computer program to calculate the POC for the worker's specific cancer. If the program determines that the worker's occupational radiation dose is "as likely as not" (greater than 50% POC) to have caused the cancer, the claim will be recommended for compensation. Claims with a POC of less than 50% will not be recommended for compensation.

If the Site Profile is revised at a future time to include information that could positively impact dose reconstruction, previously denied claims may be re-evaluated. A claim that was denied initially may also be re-evaluated if the claimant reports additional cancer(s). The DOL makes the final determination on the compensability of the claim.

The Site Profile Team has performed data capture at the DOE Ashford complex, retrieving documents and microfilm from the NFS (Nuclear Fuel Services) era. These "official" records serve as the basis for the Site Profile documents, but the Team is seeking input from the workers to fill in the gaps.

Mr. Burns explained that the EEOICPA radiation dose differs from the occupational doses kept by DOE and its contractors for the internal and external exposures to workers who were monitored for radiation exposure. The EEOICPA radiation dose has four major components: external dose, internal dose, medical dose and environmental dose. EEOICPA includes the occupational medical and environmental doses to consider radiation exposures from employer-required X-rays and environmental sources of radiation such as waste pits and storage areas.

The West Valley Demonstration Project Site Profile will be a collection of site-specific technical documents based on historical information from the West Valley contractor and DOE records. These documents include the Site Description, the Medical Dose, the Environmental Dose, the Internal Dose, and the External Dose. Mr. Burns cited examples of the types of information that workers can provide. NIOSH wants input from people who actually worked at the site to ensure that the document is an accurate and comprehensive tool for radiation dose reconstruction. Because the Site Profile is a "living document," it can be revised as new information becomes available that may affect dose reconstruction.

Mr. Burns concluded the presentation by reiterating that all of the information currently available for the Site Profile came from the DOE and contractor records on file at the Ashford complex. He encouraged the attendees to consider other sources of information that could make the Site Profile more comprehensive and accurate document for calculating dose reconstructions for EEOICPA claimants from the West Valley Site. Information that might contribute to Site Profile revisions should be sent directly to NIOSH by mail or e-mail at the addresses in the presentation, or by fax at the number provided.

Mr. Lewis stated that the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act came about as the result of a concerted grassroots effort by union workers who were dissatisfied



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

that there was no acknowledgment from the federal government that workers' health was being compromised by their occupational radiation exposures. After many years of organized effort, legislation was finally passed that gave the workers compensation and, in some cases, medical benefits. He explained that even now, almost six years after the passage of EEOICPA, many potential claimants are still unaware that the legislation exists. Part of the Worker Outreach Team's mission is to provide basic information about the law, but the DOL Resource Centers are tasked with assisting people who need to file claims.

Mr. Lewis commented that most of the information in the Site Profile is technical in nature because it is intended for use as a basic framework for the scientists who reconstruct a worker's occupational radiation dose. He explained that the Site Description is a good starting point for workers to examine the document because they are familiar with the buildings and areas of the West Valley facility, as well as any large-scale incidents or accidents that may have affected large numbers of workers. Smaller scale incidents or accidents are most likely not included in the Site Profile, but there is opportunity to discuss them during the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) that is part of the claims process. Co-worker data and/or affidavits of co-workers are often used if information is not available when survivors file claims on behalf of deceased workers. Mr. Lewis asked the attendees to bear in mind that the information that they can provide during the development of the Site Profile documents may someday be helpful to all of them as potential claimants.

Question:

Are you here because you are looking for anyone who might be interested in filing a claim?

Mark Lewis:

No, EEOICPA claims are filed through the DOL Resource Center. We are here because we are looking for worker input on the Site Profile to make it the best possible tool for the dose reconstructors. In other words, we need to hear the workers' side of the story so that the Site Profile will be able to benefit claimants from the West Valley Site. But if you know someone who worked at the plant who became ill with cancer or another illness that could be the result of their occupational exposure to hazardous material, please let them know about the program. Your regional office is in Buffalo and you will find contact information for that office in the information packet that you received at the beginning of the meeting.

Bob Burns:

If the word about this program is not out among the workforce, it is important for you to help get the word out.

Question:

Where will the interviews that you are going to conduct with the union people take place?

Mark Lewis:

My job is to arrange meetings with the local unions by working through the international and district union organizations. We are coming to you now to ask if you know of anyone out there who may have important information that will help portray the worker's perspective as the West Valley Site Profile is being developed. We don't expect to get the same candid information from Nuclear Fuel Services' or DOE's records. If we could trust their records, we wouldn't need this step in the process.

Comment:



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

We could take a stab at compiling some information ourselves.

Mark Lewis:

Yes, that would be most helpful.

Bob Burns:

If you know of anyone who may have information for us, we will do whatever we have to do to make that individual comfortable about talking with us. If you have something to tell me today, I would like to hear it. Anyone who files a claim has an opportunity to give their personal information in the CATI interview, but that is not what we are here for today. We are here to solicit information from the workers.

Comment:

Let me just bring up a couple things. One that we know to be 100% accurate is that they didn't relocate dosimetry – they didn't survey down near the floor, in the middle and up around the attic. We only found this out when there was a change to the definition to the whole body back in 2004.

Bob Burns:

Are you saying that dosimetry was worn in a prescribed location?

Response (from commenter):

We always wore it here (indicating lapel area).

Mark Lewis:

This is the kind of information that is helpful.

Comment:

We had a lot of discussions with them on this subject. They admitted in the meetings that the records will not accurately portray that they took surveys correctly. They can't prove that they did it and we know that they didn't because we went in there with them and watched them do it.

Bob Burns:

I saw some paperwork on this subject. In addition to the dosimetry, you're referring to the surveys. Is that correct?

Response (from commenter):

I'm referring to the surveys they did before we went into an area to calculate "stay time."

Response (from another attendee):

They called it "non-uniform dose field."

Bob Burns:

The scientific term is anisotropy.

Mark Lewis:

We called this type of survey a "pre-job survey" at the facility where I worked. Are you saying that the company admitted that surveys were performed incorrectly, but at the time you trusted



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

them to be correct?

Response (from commenter):

Absolutely, that was how they did their job.

Question (to commenter from another attendee):

What facility? IVF?

Response (from commenter):

It was all of them. That was how they did their job. They “trained” – and in some cases “re-trained” rad techs in 2004. This all came to light in December 2004. The absurd nature of this whole thing is that their “corrective action” was in January, but they didn’t do the training until August or September. They did start relocating the dosimetry, but we had to fight tooth and nail to get them to do it.

Question from Mark Lewis to Bob Burns:

How long will it be before they can review the Site Profile?

Bob Burns:

After the Site Profile is written, it goes through internal review and then to NIOSH for approval. It could be a few months before it’s ready for approval.

Mark Lewis (to attendees):

When the Site Profile is approved, the Team will send it to you for review. After you have had a chance to look at it, we will set up another meeting with you so you can let us know if there is anything missing or incorrect.

Question:

Do you have any knowledge of the incident where there was a downdraft after a release from the stacks? It was a few years ago.

Response (from another attendee):

We haven’t had anything like that here for 23 years.

Bob Burns:

If you will recall, Mr. Lewis said at the beginning of this meeting that COI is a real hot button for this program. Because of the policy, I have no familiarity with this site. That is a good thing because I’m not defending anything. I know very little. If it is not in the “official” documents, or I don’t get it from you, I don’t have it.

Response:

You are not going to get records from them. We know that what you want should be included in the records, but we are going to tell you that the records are wrong.

Response (from another attendee):

This is what we need to know, because if we can spend some time putting our heads together we can come up with a list of things for you.

Bob Burns:

That would be very good.

Mark Lewis:

Yes, it will be good for you, for everyone who has filed a claim and for everyone who will file a claim.

Comment:



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Working in the FRS (Fuel Receiving and Storage Building), there were a lot of unexplained uptakes.

Comment:

If a CAM (Continuous Air Monitor) went off one day, they took it out of there the next.

Response (from another attendee):

Yes. That is right.

Mark Lewis – Question to attendees:

Did they ever use an argon gamma graph (AGG) alarm?

Comment:

Up until this last year, we had TLDs (thermoluminescent dosimeters). Is that what you're talking about?

Mark Lewis:

An AGG is a big monitoring station that is used to measure gamma radiation. If the red light is glowing, it means keep going, don't stop here.

Bob Burns:

They used CAMs and area TLDs.

Question – Mark Lewis to attendees:

Did you participate in a urinalysis program?

Response:

Yes, and we trust that real well (laughter).

Question:

I'm sure this is probably the case across the country, but is it usual for a less than 10 millirem (mrem) reading to show up as "zero"?

Mark Lewis:

That is pretty much the case everywhere if that is the minimum detectable level (MDL).

Response:

I don't understand how they can get away with that without proving it.

Bob Burns:

When the EEOICPA radiation dose is calculated, this is taken into consideration. When there are "zero" readings in the worker's dose record, NIOSH applies a "missed dose" equal to one-half the MDL for each "zero" reading in the badging period. For example, if the MDL is 10 mrem and there are 12 "zero" readings in the badging period, the "missed dose" for that badging period is 5 mrem X 12, or 60 mrem.

Comment:

As far as the dosimeter storage, it all factors in there. If the end-of-the-month readout said 24 and they had 15 for background, then you were down below 10 and there would be a "zero" on the record for that month.



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Bob Burns:

This subject is addressed in the on-site Environmental document. That is where we talk about background areas and if the dosimetry was stored in a high-background area.

Response (from commenter):

I think all of us could argue for days and days about those two issues. They should have to prove that we did not get any dose.

Mark Lewis:

Basically, the Site Profile is a tool that dose constructors use to reconstruct your dose. The information that you can put in there can help claimants now and in the future. You all are potential claimants. It could help any of you or someone you know. This program is on-going. Because the program was established by legislation, it would take more legislation to repeal it. I encourage you to look at the Act, to become informed. Knowledge is power.

Mr. Lewis and Mr. Burns encouraged the attendees to feel free to contact them if they have any information that they feel should be considered for the Site Profile. Mr. Lewis urged them to involve other members of their local union in the process. He explained that NIOSH sometimes begins the EEOICPA dose reconstructions before the Site Profiles are complete. These dose reconstructions are completed using information from other sites that did similar work. NIOSH sometimes uses “maximizing assumptions” to give the worker the highest possible reasonable dose. If the probability that the worker’s cancer is “at least as likely as not” (POC greater than 50%) to have been the result of the worker’s occupational radiation exposure, the case will be considered for compensation. If the POC is less than 50%, and the case is denied, it may be re-evaluated when the Site Profile document becomes available. Likewise, when the Site Profile is revised with new information that can positively affect dose reconstruction, any previously denied claims that may be affected will be re-evaluated.

Question – Mark Lewis to attendees:

Do any of you have parents who worked at the plant, or brothers or sisters? How long have you worked there?

Response:

I have worked there for 23 years.

Response:

My father worked there when they built the facility.

Comment:

I worked out there the summer after I got out of high school. I used to go out to the NDA (Hardstand Staging Area). We have a burial ground out there. My job for one summer was if I saw something sticking out of the ground, I was supposed throw mud on it. But they never told me why I was doing it or what it was I was working with. Of course, now that I have worked there for years, I know the kind of stuff that is buried out there so I know what stuff I was exposed to out there when I was an 18 year old kid right out of high school.

Mark Lewis:

This is the kind of information that could be useful in the Site Profile.



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Bob Burns:

I'm getting this down.

Comment:

How about areas they had set up for storage facilities? They were supposed to be less than 100 mR (milliroentgen). Since they have started going through them, they are finding that after years of these drums and boxes sitting there that their survey equipment wasn't quite up to par or that they didn't have things to pinpoint it like they can now. Things have shifted and they're coming up with stuff that is one R (roentgen) or even more. People were exposed to that at times, not knowing, walking through those buildings expecting it to be 100 mR.

Bob Burns:

Is this one particular storage facility?

Response:

It is all of the storage facilities. If the waste was transported to another area, a lot of times they didn't necessarily document this in the site survey. In the last year or so, they've started doing that more frequently during the trip.

Mark Lewis:

Are you saying that things may have shifted and there wasn't always safe geometry?

Response:

When you pack the boxes, you try to get the hottest items in the middle and pack the lower-level stuff around the outside so that it shields the hotter material. But as the boxes are moved with the fork truck or the crane or whatever, all that stuff starts shifting inside the box. For years and years, they didn't do any site surveys with any frequency like they do now. That just changed in the past year. There is well over 20 years of thinking that the paper on the outside of the box was accurate. They really didn't take any readings.

Question – Mark Lewis to attendees:

On our way here, we drove past an area covered by a black plastic tarp. Is that being overseen by the Army Corp of Engineers FUSRAP (Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program)? Who monitors that area?

Response:

That is the State Disposal Area (SDA).

Comment:

This is a big undertaking.

Mark Lewis:

Yes, it is. Hopefully, the process will continue for a long time. You have the information now to help any of your members who are eligible for the program. Encourage them to file claims.

Question:

I realize this doesn't have anything to do with radiation, but what about the areas with mold spores? Would that be picked up under any of this program?

Bob Burns:

I don't know whether that would come under Subtitle E, but I'm thinking not. I can't really...



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Response:

It was a black mold. They finally realized it was hazardous and started ventilating some of those work areas.

Mark Lewis:

I suggest that you call the DOL Resource Center and ask them about it.

Question:

What about working with asbestos?

Mark Lewis:

That would come under Subtitle E. Call the Resource Center for that, too. Let them figure out how to file your claim. The intent of the law is for the worker not to have to prove what made him sick, but to have the proof rest on the shoulders of Uncle Sam.

Comment:

The individual who had the claim was kind enough to let me read it. It is very interesting reading, in that it looks completely different from what our monthly dosimetry report would look like. When we read it, it leads us to believe that there were definitely things on there that our Dosimetry Department wasn't looking for.

Mark Lewis:

Is that because the (dose reconstruction) report was adding the missed dose or the medical and environmental doses?

Bob Burns:

It could also have been a case in which the dose reconstructor used maximizing assumptions.

Response (from another attendee):

It was me and I don't care who knows it. But they gave me plenty of intakes on the report. The report came back and I think it said that I actually had 21 cases of it. Did I or didn't I?

Bob Burns:

I would be asking some questions. Without knowing the specifics, I can't answer you. It sounds like you're talking about some kind of missed dose, but without having seen it I can't really tell you anything.

Question:

Is this meeting to update the Site Profile? They had to base the answers that they gave him on something. I'm curious as to what that might have been. It's hard for us to understand how they could do this without having something.

Bob Burns:

I do not work in the claims part of the project. It is hard for me to tell you what information they used.

Response:

So we need to contact whoever did the claim and find out what kind of information they used in his dose reconstruction.

Mark Lewis:

He should call the DOL claims examiner that sent him the information. They probably added the medical X-ray dose and the environmental dose and used maximizing assumptions to give him the highest reasonable dose.

Bob Burns:



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

To get back to your question, we're not here to get information to update an existing Site Profile. The West Valley Site Profile hasn't been written yet.

Question:

So you can see how this would be interesting to me? How can any of these cases be handled if you don't have that?

Bob Burns:

Yes, I can see how you would find it unusual that a claim could be processed without a Site Profile. As Mark told you earlier, some of the obviously compensable claims can be processed without the Site Profile. Has anyone from the West Valley Site been paid?

Response:

Yes. Several of the claims have been paid.

Mark Lewis:

We have heard this question at other sites, too. I have asked the question myself. And the short answer is that NIOSH is under pressure to process some of the older claims.

Bob Burns:

I think that DOL has sent roughly 40 claims from the West Valley site to NIOSH for dose reconstruction.

Comment:

It would be nice if we knew whose claims have been denied so we can tell them that their claims will be looked at again when the Site Profile is done.

Bob Burns:

We don't know the status of those claims, though. That is the number of cases that have been sent for dose reconstruction.

Mark Lewis:

When the Site Profile is complete, the denied claims may be looked at again.

Question:

Is this Site Profile something like a Bell curve against the industry norm? Or is this something to collate the data for our particular site for anybody who worked there that files a claim?

Bob Burns:

The West Valley Site Profile is specific to this site. It is a reference document for the dose reconstructors to fill in the gaps during a West Valley worker's dose reconstruction. The worker's radiation dose record, medical records, and personal information from the CATI interview are also used. The Site Profile gives the dose reconstructors information about the site so that all of the EEOICPA claims will be handled the same way.

Question:

Is this being driven by the fact that there have been 40 claims?

Bob Burns:

Yes.

Mark Lewis:

If you look at the NIOSH Web site, you can see the Site Profiles from other DOE facilities across the nation. Mary, do you have the NIOSH Web address in the packet?

Mary Elliott:



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

The NIOSH Web address is <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ocas>. There is a lot of information about EEOICPA and the dose reconstructions in process, as well as the Site Profiles that are complete. When the West Valley Site Profile is finished, it will be published on the NIOSH Web site, too. The last slide on the handout has the Web site, and it is on the back of the NIOSH Fact Sheets in your packets.

Comment from IAM District 65 Business Representative:

Even before this meeting was put together, I started talking to Vern McDougall last May about the program. Because I had never heard about the program, I talked to our International Safety Rep and with other folks in D.C. who told me that Vern McDougall and his crew come highly recommended.

Comment:

I'm just a little leery about what sort of questions you are fishing for. I'm concerned lately because we have systems that used to run with ventilation that used to run for damage control. Now we have a lot of ventilation systems that are shut down and the buildings are just sitting there with stagnant air. It's blistering hot in those buildings and we're going in there to take rad readings on instruments. We don't know what the controls are anymore because we can't trust the company to tell us that we're really safe. We're still taking their word for it even though we know they have lied to us in these situations. We have tanks out there that have six feet of radioactive liquid that is still out there and they are telling us that it's all low-level waste. I don't know exactly what it is that we should be bringing forward or what is just right out bitching.

Response (from another attendee):

All of it – get it all out.

Mark Lewis:

Go through your District Safety Representative or whoever you need to go through to get us this information. We don't want to undermine your International Union or mess up your local's business. We want to make sure that it is a concerted effort from everyone. I would advise you to go through your Safety Reps at all levels to make sure that it is a valid concern.

Question:

Bob, in your research, did you get into any of the Vitrification Building incident in January 2005?

Bob Burns:

At this point, I've collected all the information and put it onto compact discs, but I haven't been able to spend a lot of time to go through it.

Response:

Basically, our union had to sit down and tell Dosimetry how to do their job to check for dose going to the eye, extremity dose and so on and so forth – non-uniform dose rates.

Bob Burns:

Was this in the Vitrification facility? Was that the result of the non-uniform fields?

Response:

The incident was actually in the Crane Maintenance Room (CMR).



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

Mark Lewis – Question to attendees:

Does the Company know that we're talking to you today?

Response:

Yes. I explained to them our meeting was about this program (EEOICPA).

Mark Lewis:

Who is the contractor now?

Response:

The Washington Group is the contractor.

Comment:

They didn't do a dose assessment of the box that caused the exposure (in the above incident). They actually got rid of the box before they went into the building to do a dose assessment. Then they went in and reconstructed everything. The other interesting point is that because one individual didn't have a dose assigned to him, they took his badges away from him sometime in the middle of the summer. They violated their own Dosimetry Program by allowing him onsite without a dosimeter and allowed him to keep working in non-rad areas. The practice has always been that as soon as you walk through the gate you need dosimetry.

Response (from another attendee):

The dosimetry is picking stuff up from the background.

Comment (continued from above):

For about half a year, this worker did not have any dosimetry.

Mark Lewis – Question to attendees:

How many people work at the site?

Response:

There are about 140 union people working out there.

Mark Lewis:

The compensation is not just for union workers, anyone who has worked at the site can file a claim.

Comment:

Some of the Radiation Technicians may be interested in talking to you. They have actually helped us out quite a bit.

Mark Lewis:

I'm sure they could offer some very useful information. The input doesn't have to come from union workers. It can come from anyone who has worked at the site. We have met with retiree groups from sites where there were no unions and have gotten some very useful information from them. If the rad techs want to talk to Bob, we will make sure they won't receive any retribution for it.

Comment:

We have dug pretty deep into the dosimetry issues at the plant the last couple years. We were pretty annoyed with the way the company was handling it. Before we started processing the liquid waste, they came to decontaminate and decommission (D&D) some of the areas around the plant. Throughout all of that, there was no consideration of non-uniform dose. We were in



NIOSH Dose Reconstruction Project Introductory Meeting on Development of Site Profile for West Valley Demonstration Project

the middle of doing the D&D in one of these areas when the incident occurred. Evidently that whole body definition changed in 1990 or 1991.

Mark Lewis – Question to attendees:

Were you still in a urinalysis program when the incident happened?

Response:

Yes. (*Name withheld*) wasn't for awhile. He ended up quitting and he left the facility. But then he came back to the facility, some of his lifetime dose was erased and he was allowed to work in the rad areas again. His lifetime dose didn't exist anymore. He's dead now. He died at 48.

Comment:

There have been lots of times when the urinalysis results came back and the company would say the lab screwed up. Over a period of three or four years, it happened to a lot of different people. They passed one out of four.

After asking if there were any further questions or comments, Mr. Lewis thanked the attendees for their time and adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:30 p.m.