



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

May 13, 2009

Dr. Thom Mason
President and CEO
UT-Battelle
Oak Ridge National Laboratory
P.O. Box 2008
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831-6255

Dear Dr. Mason:

The Department of Energy's Office of Enforcement within the Office of Health, Safety and Security has conducted an evaluation of the deficiencies described in Noncompliance Tracking System (NTS) report NTS-ORO--ORNL-X10PHYSICS-2008-0001, *Operational Emergency at Building 6000, Holifield Radioactive Ion Beam Facility*. Our evaluation included a review of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Management Investigation Team Report dated November 19, 2008, the associated corrective action plan, and discussions with site personnel.

The subject NTS report described a series of deficiencies at the Holifield Radioactive Ion Beam Facility (HRIBF) that resulted in the release of short-lived radioactive noble gases into the occupied areas of the facility. The releases occurred during July 26 – 28, 2008, and resulted in the personal contamination to six ORNL Physics Division employees, with a maximum of 64,500 dpm/100cm² on the hand of a Radiological Control Technician. There was no measurable dose to personnel from this event; however, this was fortuitous and exposures could have been significantly higher.

Upon identification of the release of airborne radioactivity, the HRIBF was evacuated and ORNL management initiated an investigation. Noncompliances were identified with maintaining and verifying controls which prevent the inadvertent transfer of removable contamination. Additionally, deficiencies were identified that were associated with maintenance, training, and hazard identification.

Potential violations of 10 C.F.R. Part 835 occurred in association with this event. Monitoring was insufficient to detect changes in radiological conditions in a timely manner, and systems designed to keep doses as low as reasonably achievable were not used effectively. However, the Office of Enforcement also noted that once the release of airborne radioactivity was identified, corrective actions were prompt and conservative, and that your investigation into this event was detailed and comprehensive. The corrective actions addressed the identified concerns on multiple levels.

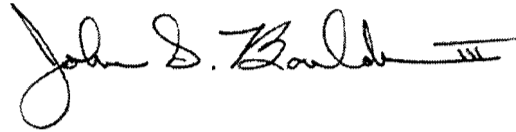


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In recognition of the comprehensive scope of your investigation and corrective actions, we have determined that further enforcement investigation by our office is not warranted at this time. In conjunction with the DOE ORNL Site Office and Office of Science, we will continue to monitor the completion of the corrective actions.

No response to this letter is required. Should you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 903-2178 or have your staff contact Mr. Glenn Morris, Director, Office of Price-Anderson Enforcement, at (301) 903-1251.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Boulden III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

John S. Boulden III
Acting Director
Office of Enforcement
Office of Health, Safety and Security

cc: Debbie Jenkins, UT-Battelle
Richard Azzaro, DNFSB