

Centers for Disease Control
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH)
137th Meeting

Tuesday, December 8, and Wednesday December 9, 2020

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Summary Proceedings

The Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health meeting convened via teleconference at 1:15 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), Dr. Rashaun Roberts, Designated Federal Official, presiding.

Attendees

Members

Rashaun Roberts, Designated Federal Official
Henry Anderson, Member
Josie Beach, Member
Bradley P. Clawson, Member
R. William Field, Member
David Kotelchuck, Member
James E. Lockey, Member
David B. Richardson, Member
Genevieve S. Roessler, Member
Phillip Schofield, Member
Loretta R. Valerio, Member
Paul L. Ziemer, Member

Non-Members, Registered and/or Public Comment Participants:

Adams, Nancy, NIOSH Contractor
Barrett, Andy, Savannah River Site
Barrie, Terrie, ANWAG
Barton, Bob, SC&A
Blaze, D'lanie, Petitioner
Buchanan, Ron, SC&A
Burgos, Zaida, NIOSH
Calhoun, Grady, NIOSH ORAU
Cardarelli, John, NIOSH ORAU
Crawford, Chris, DOL
Davy, Brad, DOE
Fitzgerald, Joe, SC&A
Frowiss, Albert, Petitioner
Gogliotti, Rose, SC&A
Gorden, Milton, SC&A

Halsey, Roger, ORAU Team
Harrison-maples, Monica, ORAU Team
Hicks, Stephen, Petitioner
Hughes, Lara, DCAS
Lewis, Greg, DOE
Naylor, Jenny, HHS OGC
Nelson, Chuck, NIOSH ORAU
Rutherford, Lavon, NIOSH ORAU
Sisko, Jeannie
Taulbee, Tim, NIOSH ORAU
Vinson, Kathleen

Roll Call/Welcome - Dr. Rashaun Roberts, DFO

Dr. Rashaun Roberts called to order the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health at 1:15 pm EST on December 8, 2020, via teleconference. A roll call of all ABRWH members confirmed that a quorum was present. The quorum was maintained throughout the meeting. Dr. Roberts noted that Dr. Lockey has a conflict of interest with respect to the Y-12 plant, so she asked him to disconnect from the call for the Y-12 discussion.

Program Updates: NIOSH, DOL, and DOE

Grady Calhoun (NIOSH), Chris Crawford (DOL), and Greg Lewis (DOE) gave updates of each organization's activities for the EEOICPA Program and responded to questions from Board Members.

Update on Y-12 Plant SEC Petition 250 (Oak Ridge, Tennessee; 1987-1994) – Bob Barton, SC&A

Dr. Field, the chair of the Y-12 Work Group introduced Bob Barton of SC&A to present the update on the petition. Much of the report concerned efforts to determine if the available personnel monitoring data for thorium and uranium were sufficiently complete, adequate, and representative to form the basis for co-exposure models. Such models are necessary to account for exposures to workers who were not monitored or whose monitoring records were lost. The Board has recently adopted an Implementation Guide that provides criteria for co-exposure models. Those criteria include completeness, adequacy, and representativeness. NIOSH is in the process of evaluating Y-12 data to determine if it satisfies the Implementation Guide criteria. Additionally, at a recent Y-12 Work Group meeting, the SEC petitioner raised a number of concerns about the feasibility of dose reconstruction and asked that a number of former Y-12 workers be interviewed as part of the SEC evaluation process. Not all the interviews could be arranged, but the ones that could were completed recently. The notes from those interviews must still be reviewed by DOE for classification, then reviewed by the interviewees for correctness before the information can be considered by the program. Going forward, NIOSH will complete co-exposure models, provided the data meet the Implementation Guide criteria; address issues raised by the petitioner in the Work Group meeting and in the recent former worker interviews; and complete an addendum to SEC-250 Evaluation Report in order to address the years 1987-1994. Those years were reserved for future consideration when NIOSH published the SEC-250 Evaluation Report.

Board Work Session

Dr. Roberts reminded Board members of the dates for the next several meetings: telephone meeting February 25; virtual meeting April 14 & 15; telephone meeting June 23; planned in-person meeting August 18 & 19, with the expectation that COVID restrictions would be lifted because of the availability of a vaccine.

Work Group chairs reported on issues under consideration, recent progress, and planned investigations and meetings.

Update on Area IV Santa Susanna Field Laboratory SEC Petition 235 (Ventura County, California; 1991-1993) and DeSoto Avenue SEC Petition 246 – Bob Barton, SC&A

Phillip Schofield, chair of the Santa Susanna Field Laboratory Work Group noted that CORE Advocacy had submitted a good deal of information to the Work Group in October that was being evaluated by NIOSH and SC&A, then introduced Bob Barton of SC&A to present the update. Recently SC&A has investigated the possibility that there were actinide (neptunium, plutonium, americium) exposures at Santa Susanna after 1988, the final year of the SEC class that had previously been added for that facility. The investigation centered on whether a program called Transuranic Waste Management by Pyropartitioning Separation (TRUMP-S) was conducted at Santa Susanna after 1988. SC&A concluded that, while Santa Susanna originally planned to perform that work, it never received approval from DOE to perform it, so the work was performed at the University of Missouri reactor facility instead. While SC&A found no evidence that the site worked with actinides after 1988, it will likely be necessary to reconstruct doses from actinide exposure during the site remediation period. NIOSH intends to develop a method using air sampling data. A good deal of air sampling data is available in DOE records, but COVID restrictions have prevented NIOSH from capturing that data. Interviews and documents provide no evidence that there were significant amounts of thorium or americium at DeSoto, but americium contamination was found in a drain in the mass spectrometry lab. SC&A also reviewed hundreds of incidents in the Boeing incident database and found two related to DeSoto that may prompt additional investigation to ensure that NIOSH's current understanding of the types of materials that were present at DeSoto is correct.

Public Comment

Members of the public provided comments related to the Y-12 Plant, Savannah River, Area IV of Santa Susanna Field Laboratory, and DeSoto. Following public comment, Dr. Roberts adjourned for the day at 5:53 pm EST.

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

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Cardarelli, John, DCAS
Fester, Joshua, On behalf of Petitioner
Fitzgerald, Joe, SC&A
Gogliotti, Rose, SC&A
Lewis, Greg, DOE
Naylor, Jenny, HHS OGC
Nelson, Charles, DCAS
Rutherford, Lavon, DCAS
Sisko, Jeannie
Taulbee, Tim, DCAS

Roll Call/Welcome – Dr. Rashaun Roberts, DFO

Dr. Rashaun Roberts called to order the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health at 1:15 pm EST on December 9, 2020 via teleconference. A roll call of all ABRWH members confirmed that a quorum was present. The quorum was maintained throughout the meeting. Dr. Roberts noted that the Savannah River Site was the only site on the day's agenda, and no members have conflicts of interest with respect to that site.

SEC Petition Status Update & SEC Qualification Process – LaVon Rutherford, DCAS

Mr. Rutherford reported that DCAS is in the process of determining if SEC petitions from the Rocky Flats and Pantex plants qualified for evaluation; DCAS is completing the evaluation report for a petition from the Pinellas plant; DCAS is preparing addenda to previously completed evaluation reports for Lawrence Livermore National Lab and the Y-12 Plant; and DCAS and SC&A are continuing work on SEC petitions from Hanford, Savannah River, Los Alamos National Lab, Sandia National Lab, Idaho National Lab, Argonne National Lab-West, Area IV Santa Susanna, Metals & Controls, DeSoto Avenue Facility, and Reduction Pilot Plant. He also reported that DCAS has identified that it may forward an 83.14 SEC Evaluation Report for West Valley Demonstration Project but has not yet completed the evaluation. Finally, he presented a description of the SEC Petition qualification process and responded to questions from Board members.

Savannah River Site SEC Petition 103 (Aiken, South Carolina; October 1972 – 2017) – Brad Clawson, SRS Work Group Chair

Mr. Clawson presented a summary of the documents prepared by SC&A and DCAS during consideration of the petition, and the Work Groups reasons for concluding at its meetings on November 17 and 20, 2020 that it should recommend the addition of an SEC class for Savannah River Site subcontractor construction trades workers for the period October 1, 1972 to December 31, 1990.

Next Dr. Timothy Taulbee, DCAS, presented the results of the investigations by DCAS and its contractor that led DCAS to the conclusion that dose reconstruction was feasible for all Savannah River workers, as had been DCAS's determination in the Petition 103 Evaluation Report. Dr. Taulbee presented the information contained in Reports RPRT-92 and RPRT-94, which had been provided to the Savannah River Work Group members before the Work Group meetings in November, and an additional analysis of subcontractor monitoring based on evaluation of the data in Savannah River's plutonium bioassay logbooks. Following his presentation, he responded to questions from Board members.

Next Joe Fitzgerald, SC&A, presented the critique of RPRT-92 that had previously been discussed by the Savannah River Site Work Group, and focused on job-specific bioassay sampling, rather than routine sampling or incident sampling. Subcontractor construction trades workers, due to the nature of their work, would likely be monitoring by job-specific sampling rather than routine sampling, and the Savannah River Site had demonstrated poor compliance with job-specific sampling as late as 1997.

Board members then discussed the information presented. During Board discussions, Warren Johnson, attorney for the petitioner, commented, focusing on the length of time that the Board has been considering Petition 103. Board discussion continued until the required meeting ending time of 5:30, so the Board voted to table the motion to recommend adding a class until its February telephone meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm EST.