

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Determination Concerning a
Petition to Add Members to the Special Exposure Cohort
under the
Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000

Determination Concerning a Petition for Certain Employees from
International Nickel Company (INCO)
Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP)
Huntington, West Virginia



-HHS Special Exposure Cohort Determination:

International Nickel Company (INCO)
Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP) Huntington, West Virginia

[SEC-00253]

I. Determination

I, Xavier Becerra, Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary) (HHS), have determined that the employees defined in Section II of this report do not meet the statutory criteria 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.

[Signature on File]

September 27, 2022

Xavier Becerra, Secretary

Date

II. Employee Class Definition

All International Nickel Company (INCO) security personnel who worked at any location within the Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP) during the period from June 7, 1976, through November 26, 1978.

III. Decision Criteria and Recommendations

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7384q, to designate a class for addition to the SEC, the Secretary must determine, upon recommendation of the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (Board), 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 the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (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.

In a letter dated May 16, 2022, and received on May 19, 2022, the Board, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7384q, agreed with the following NIOSH findings, effectively advising the Secretary that radiation doses can be reconstructed with sufficient accuracy for the evaluated

HHS Special Exposure Cohort Determination:

International Nickel Company (INCO)
Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP) Huntington, West Virginia

[SEC-00253]

Page | 2

class of employees who worked at the International Nickel Company (INCO) Reduction Pilot Plant in accordance with provisions of EEOICPA and the SEC final rule.

IV. Determination Findings

Feasibility of Estimating Radiation Doses

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

- The principal sources of internal radiation doses assessed for members of the class under evaluation included inhalation and ingestion exposures to low-enriched uranium and fuel-reprocessing contaminants due to resuspension from activities during the plant's Standby Period. NIOSH concluded that internal radiation dose reconstruction from these exposures is feasible. The Board concurred with this finding.
- NIOSH has determined that it has sufficient information to reconstruct internal radiation doses for the evaluated class of employees who worked at the site from June 7, 1976, through November 26, 1978. The Board also concurred with this finding.
- Principal sources of external radiation for members of the class under evaluation included photon and beta radiation exposures from process residues containing uranium and reprocessed fuel contaminants to low-enriched uranium and fuel-reprocessing contaminants from activities during the plant's Standby Period.
- NIOSH has determined that it has sufficient information to reconstruct external radiation doses for the evaluated class of employees who worked at the site from June 7, 1976, through November 26, 1978. The Board concurred with this finding.
- NIOSH has established that it has access to sufficient information to: (1) estimate the maximum radiation dose, for every type of cancer for which radiation doses are reconstructed, that could have been incurred in plausible circumstances in any member of the class; or (2) estimate radiation doses more precisely than an estimate of maximum dose for all covered RPP security personnel from June 7, 1976, through November 26, 1978. Information in available resources is sufficient to estimate the maximum internal and external potential exposure to members of the evaluated class under plausible circumstances during the specified periods.
- The Board concurred with NIOSH's determination that dose reconstruction is feasible for the evaluated class of International Nickel Company (INCO) security personnel who worked at any location within the Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP) during the period from June 7, 1976, through November 26, 1978, and therefore the class should not be added to the SEC.

HHS Special Exposure Cohort Determination:

International Nickel Company (INCO)
Reduction Pilot Plant (RPP) Huntington, West Virginia

[SEC-00253]

Page | 3

Health Endangerment

Because the Secretary established that it is feasible to estimate the radiation doses encountered by International Nickel Company, RPP security personnel as specified in this class, a determination of health endangerment is not required.

V. Effect of the Determination

Members of the class of employees covered by this determination and their survivors continue to be eligible to submit claims for compensation under EEOICPA. As required for cancer claims covering other Department of Energy and Atomic Weapons Employer employees (or Atomic Weapons employees) not included in the SEC, qualified cancer claims under Part B of EEOICPA for members of this class will be adjudicated by the Department of Labor, in part, on the basis of radiation dose reconstructions, which will be conducted by NIOSH.

VI. Administrative Review of Determination

The determination 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 designate the class of employees covered by this determination, in part or in whole, as an addition to the SEC, the Secretary will transmit a new report to Congress providing the designation and the criteria and findings on which the decision was based.