

July 21, 1998

Mr. Robert G. Card  
[ ]  
Kaiser-Hill Company, L.L.C.  
Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site  
P.O. Box 464  
Golden, CO 80402-0464

Subject: Enforcement Letter  
Noncompliance Report: NTS-RFO--KHLL-771OPS-1997-0002

Dear Mr. Card:

This letter refers to the Department of Energy (DOE) evaluation of potential noncompliances with the requirements of 10 CFR 830.120 (Quality Assurance Rule). The potential noncompliances involved inadequate implementation of work controls, specifically failure of workers to perform required surveillance of the Fire Protection System. The failure to fully perform the required surveillance was identified by Safe Sites of Colorado (SSOC) on June 2, 1997, and reported to DOE in the subject Noncompliance Tracking System report on June 26, 1997.

On June 2, 1997, the Building 771 Operations Manager identified an apparent discrepancy while reviewing the Fire Systems Services, Operational Safety Requirement (OSR), Limiting Conditions for Operations (LCO) surveillances for Building 774. The sprinkler head section of the completed surveillance document, for Filter Plenum 203, contained a remark by DynCorp of Colorado, Inc. (DCI) personnel (surveillance performer) indicating the surveillance was satisfied by verification of a flow alarm rather than by direct visual surveillance. The surveillance, conducted in this fashion, is not in conformance with the surveillance procedure and the Building 774 Operational Safety Requirements (OSR). [ ]. In addition to the concerns identified for inspection of inaccessible sprinkler heads, your review discovered that some sprinkler heads that were accessible were not being visually inspected [ ]. Documentation for the surveillance of sprinkler heads in Building 776, 777, and 779 indicated the required surveillance was completed. Subsequent investigation determined that visual inspections were not performed on all sprinkler heads in these facilities. In some cases surveillance personnel deemed the surveillance requirement to be met by visual inspection of a random sample of the heads in the system.

The root cause analysis performed by DCI identified that personnel were not able to perform

certain procedure steps as written. The sprinkler heads for Filter Plenum 203 could not be visually inspected unless personnel entered the Filter Plenum, using self-contained breathing air and other personnel protection. In lieu of visual inspections of the sprinklers, personnel listened for the sound of running water and observed the water flow alarm. This practice was allowed by informal guidance from Kaiser-Hill Fire Protection Engineering, but no formal changes were made to the Building OSR and surveillance procedure, allowing workers to be non-compliant with the surveillance procedures. Your review of this problem identified the same practice was used in surveillance of the Building 771 Main Exhaust Plenum and the Building 771C Annex Plenum.

The DCI root cause analysis attributes the root cause to long-standing problems with the management systems associated with the fire protection program. The analysis cites a closely related root cause analysis (Kaiser-Hill Fire Protection Program Root Cause Analysis, CA-97-001, March 20, 1997) that describes the programmatic breakdown in fire protection. The surveillance procedures and the OSRs were inconsistent with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 25, the national standard for testing of fire protection systems. The NFPA standard provides relief for sprinkler head inspection if the sprinkler is installed in an inaccessible area.

It is recognized that the deficiencies did not result in an immediate safety concern, but could lead to degraded safety system performance over time. Proper conduct of surveillance is critical to ensuring the material condition and operability of systems important to safety. Further, it is noted that the deficiencies were uncovered by the contractor=s (SSOC) questioning attitude although it appears that Kaiser-Hill and its subcontractors had reasonable opportunity to identify the noncompliances prior to June 1997. DOE also recognizes that the root cause analysis of the surveillance failures was thorough, and the corrective action plan based on that root cause analysis describes a comprehensive set of actions that, if fully implemented, could be expected to prevent recurrence of the problems identified. Considering the above information, it is our judgment that the circumstances of these noncompliances meet the discretionary criteria in DOE=s nuclear safety enforcement policy. Therefore, the exercise of discretion not to undertake enforcement action at this time is warranted. However, the final decision to refrain from taking an enforcement action is contingent upon the adequacy of implementation and effectiveness of the current corrective actions. A member of my staff will continue to coordinate the review of the status of your corrective actions with the DOE-RFFO Price-Anderson Coordinator.

If you would like to discuss these matters further, please contact Richard Trevillian of my staff at 301-903-0100.

Sincerely,

R. Keith Christopher  
Director  
Office of Enforcement and Investigation

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