

A. C. Graves, J-DO

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TOPIC Pacific Proving Ground General R

T. L. Shipman, M.D.

PROPOSAL CONCERNING EPG RAD-SAFETY FROM OTO

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The attached proposal was recently sent from Jim Reeves' Office requesting the Laboratory's comments. The document has been given careful consideration by me, by Gordon Jacks and by Bill Kennedy. The last two names indicate their concurrence by endorsement. In general, we all disagree rather strongly with the basic proposal and we take quite strong exception to some of the statements contained in it.

The covering letter itself expresses what we regard as a misconception. In the second paragraph is the implication that rad-safety service is nothing more than a support service in the same category as the provision of housing, messing and utilities. This is a concept which is certainly foreign to the philosophy accepted at LASL.

Page 1, Section 1: In the opening sentence it is stated that the military unit has functioned "with a few LASL personnel participating". The truth is that one LASL health physicist was assigned to TU-6 to serve in an advisory and consulting capacity. At the end of this paragraph it says that the total peak strength during operations is usually about 115 officers and enlisted men. Actually TU-6 started Operation Hardtack with a total of 99 officers and enlisted men and this number was quickly reduced to approximately 80. Plans for a forthcoming operation, should one be held and should it be similar to previous ones, call for a total of 75.

Page 1, Section 1, Paragraph 3: This paragraph implies a serious lack of understanding of the functions and responsibilities of a rad-safe organization. Project monitors provided by the projects themselves have always been responsible to the rad-safe officer, and it is the rad-safe organization which has the responsibility of interpreting their findings and making necessary recommendations.

Page 2, Section 2a: At EPG there has been continuous and effective continuity of rad-safe supervision from Operation Greenhouse to the present. John Servis spent several months at LASL receiving orientation from senior members of the Greenhouse Rad-Safe organization. He and Gordon Jacks together with LASL personnel worked closely together before transferring the responsibility prior to Operation Redwing. The implication that either of these men were incompetent or were not well-qualified health physicists is obviously incorrect. It is utterly foolish to expect that EPH could provide any more continuity or better qualified people. They have never been able to keep anyone longer than 18 months so far. As for the health physicists connected with OTO, one of them

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is an Army officer subject to transfer at any time, the other belongs to the U. S. Public Health Service and he is also subject to transfer should the USPHS so desire.

Page 2, Section 2b: If tests go to a more continuous basis, the problems of the existing type of organization will be even simpler. There does not seem to be much reason to believe, however, that we will get away from the Task Force type of operation. The final sentence in this paragraph is correct only if a test is carried out on a very minimum basis, something like an isolated safety shot at Nevada.

Page 2, Section 2, c:

(1) The loss of effectiveness of the H & N Rad-Safe organization principally reflect the inability to obtain and keep competent men.

(2) This statement is incorrect.

(3) TU-6 as a military organization has always procured such equipment as was available through normal military channels. What was not available was purchased through AEC.

(4) If this sentence were true, it would be a very serious indictment of past rad-safe organizations. I believe it to be both incorrect and misleading.

(5) Certain jobs of decontamination and other forms of clean up have always been left. Members of TU-6, however, were always about the last portions of TU 7.1 to leave and then only when their rollup operations had been completed.

(6) On two occasions Gordon Jacks requested the services of Carl Minkanen, the H & N Rad-Safe Officer, to assume command of TU-6 while he went to Bikini Island. This request was denied by H & N.

Page 3, Section 3: Just as long as there is to be a JTF type of organization, the CJTF obviously cannot have any part of it independent of his command. He needs closer and not more remote supervision of rad-safety. The majority of the user test groups both need and desire a strong and highly competent rad-safe organization.

Page 3, Section 4:

(a) The experience at HES has not been entirely satisfactory, and it has gone through several attacks of growing pains. Without the competence of Bill Johnson at HES, the situation could have been very much worse. It should be pointed out, however, that it is reasonable to expect people to remain on the HESCO payroll at Mercury for long periods of time. It is not reasonable to expect that this will be true of HPG.

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Page 3, Section 4 (contd):

(b) This was tried at Operation Redwing and found to be unsuccessful. I doubt if it is possible to create qualified monitors out of excess iron workers, carpenters, or electricians.

(c) This is doubtful.

(d) There has certainly been confusion as to responsibility at NTS, and there seems no reason to believe that the same would not be true at EPG.

(e) This is doubtful.

(f) There has been considerable interchange of equipment between EPG and NTS. In the past H & N has attempted to hire HECCO rad-safe personnel unsuccessfully; they just didn't want to go to the Pacific.

(g) H & N personnel have to be transported at least from Los Angeles if not farther. All of these people are drawing industrial salaries while the military salaries are paid by DOD.

(h) The size of TU-6 has been commented on above. I have no reason to believe that H & N could furnish the same service any more efficiently.

With a single exception, I do not propose to make specific comments on the remainder of this proposal, as it appears that the question before the house at the moment is the basic decision as to whether or not this change should be made. The one exception is the organization chart on page 5. Here it will be noted that there are five people in the line of command between CJTF and the Rad-Safe Officer. According to the past organization, the only individual between them was CTG 7.1, and for practical purposes the Rad-Safe Officer would usually report directly to CJTF-7. This system has been one of the sources of confusion at NTS.

If further comments are desired, we still have a number we could add.

T. L. SHEPMAN, M.D.
Health Division Leader

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Endorsement By: _____

William R. Kennedy

Endorsement By: _____

Gordon L. Jacks