



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE
P. O. BOX 1814
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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410453

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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Dear Mr. Strauss:

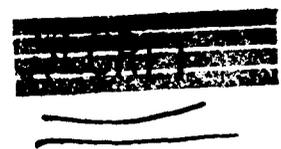
The U. S. Air Force is faced with the problem that both Convair and Boeing Aircraft Companies have stated that certain U. S. Air Force aircraft sent to these companies for modification are too contaminated to permit company personnel to work on them. These include aircraft which have not participated in atomic test operations. The aircraft companies are using tolerance levels based on 12,000 dpm per square foot for surface contamination. Use of such extremely conservative standards has necessitated extensive and expensive decontamination procedures which have, in some instances, unduly delayed returning B-36 and B-52 aircraft to combat configurations.

The U. S. Air Force has been evaluating this contamination hazard for the last two years. This evaluation has resulted in the publication of U. S. Air Force Technical Order 00-110A-1, "Identification and Handling of Radioactive and Contaminated Aircraft and Material," dated 25 May 1956 and Armed Forces Special Weapons Center Technical Note 56-2, "Safe Levels of Contamination from Fission Products." Both of these documents were given to the Atomic Energy Commission Division of Biology and Medicine on 21 February 1957. A revision of the AFSWC Technical Note containing additional information will be forwarded to the AEC about 15 April 1957. These documents provide tolerances believed to be realistic and conservative and procedures based on established AEC criteria of permissible concentrations of fission products in air, water, and various surfaces. The aircraft companies have doubted the validity of the U. S. Air Force tolerances.

As a result of the last two atomic test operations at the Eniwetok Proving Grounds, sufficient fission products have been deposited throughout the continental U. S. to be readily detectable by radiation monitoring instruments available to U. S. Air Force contractors. For example, Atomic Energy Commission Research and Development Report, NYO 4645, "Worldwide Fallout from Operation CASTLE," by Robert J. List, dated 17 May 1955 indicates maximum depositions of radioactivity in certain areas of approximately 40,000 dpm per square foot one hundred days after the conclusion

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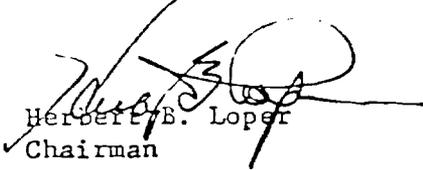
of the CASTLE test series. The amount of radiation fallout which has occurred within the USA as a result of weapons testing makes the 12,000 dpm criterion used by the airplane companies unrealistic.

An example of the conservatism of the U. S. Air Force tolerance figures established in the U. S. Air Force Technical Order and the Armed Forces Special Weapons Center Technical Note is that a resuspension factor of 1 in 10^4 was used in their calculation whereas U. S. Air Force experimentally found field data indicates a factor of 1 in 10^8 .

It is requested that the Atomic Energy Commission concur in the validity of the U. S. Air Force reports. If the AEC does not agree with the U. S. Air Force tolerance levels, it is requested that the Commission and the USAF jointly establish acceptable tolerance levels.

Prompt action in this matter appears to be desirable since this may eventually represent a more universal problem.

Sincerely yours,


Herbert B. Loper
Chairman

The Honorable Lewis L. Strauss
Chairman
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

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