

DOE FACTS

THE HUMAN RADIATION EXPERIMENTS INFORMATION CENTER

The Department established the Human Radiation Experiments Information Center (HREIC) to coordinate the receipt of and response to public inquiries regarding the involvement of DOE and its predecessor agencies. Inquiries are first reviewed to determine the applicability to radiation experiments and the responsible Federal agency. A second review is used to analyze the facts about potential subjects of DOE-related radiation experiments. This process uses caseworker teams with expertise in medicine, health physics, environmental science, history, and records management to develop findings. Both steps use rigorous quality assurance procedures to ensure accuracy.

SPECIFICALLY:

- To date, over 5,000 letters and 23,000 help line calls have been received.
- The HREIC has administrative and technical staff to log, process, analyze, and respond to individual inquiries.
- All correspondents have received an interim written response from the Department.
- Caseworkers use many information sources to research inquiries. The HREIC database, with details from all correspondents and help line callers, is used to find facts about specific persons, places, and events.

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- Computer access to the experiment-related documents and indexes maintained by the Coordination and Information Center (CIC) in Las Vegas, Nevada, is available.
- Caseworkers also use historical "maps" of Departmental organizations, as well as guides to pertinent records collections and other sources. Other tools include bibliographies and other specialized research aids prepared by the Department for this effort.

BACKGROUND:

- HREIC was established soon after the Secretary's December 1993 press conference to handle telephone and written inquiries about human radiation experiments.
- DOE is serving as central clearinghouse for Federal government. Experiment-related inquiries have been logged and transferred to Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Health and Human Services.
- HREIC activities and tools are closely linked to Departmental efforts to locate historical records, develop institutional maps, and identify experiments.
- HREIC is an element of the Office of Human Radiation Research headed by Ms. Ellyn Weiss.

BENEFITS:

- Persons concerned about exposure to hazards from potential human radiation experiments will receive specific information relating to their concerns.
- Facts relating to specific experiments as well as the institutional context in which they occurred will be made available to the public (personal privacy information will be protected).
- Through its operations, the HREIC will promote both openness and responsiveness within DOE.

WHO ARE THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS?:

- Subjects of Human Radiation Experimentation and their families. The products will provide critical facts about experiments.

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- Government Officials. The HREIC will help provide information needed to determine whether human radiation experimentation was conducted in accordance with applicable regulations and guidelines.
- The Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments. This work will provide the Committee with information they need to carry out their mandate from the President.