



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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HEALTH AND MEDICAL

JUL 14 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE HERBERT B. LOPER  
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF  
DEFENSE (ATOMIC ENERGY)

SUBJECT: Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal  
Agencies.

In regard to Secretary Flemming's letter, we have sent  
the enclosed memorandum to the services, copy of which I am  
forwarding to you for your information. When the results  
are received, they will be coordinated with you.

*E. H. Cushing*  
E. H. CUSHING, M. D.  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
of Defense

Enclosure - 1

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*Book*  
JUL 15



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

JUL 13 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY  
THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal  
Agencies.

Attached is copy of a letter of 8 July 1960 from the Chairman of the Federal Radiation Council, requesting a report on radiation protection activities to be conducted by the Department of Defense under the "Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal Agencies" promulgated by the President. Information is requested upon which to base a reply to the Chairman of the Council with specific reference to the last two paragraphs of the attached letter. Your reply should be forwarded to reach this office not later than 26 July 1960.

Your attention is invited to my memorandum of 8 June 1960, subject as above, requesting the establishment of a working group to revise departmental regulations to conform to the "Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal Agencies". It is our understanding that this working group is functioning with Captain Paul F. Blotens, Jr., ME, USN, (Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Department of the Navy, Extension 63978), acting as coordinator for the group. He may be able to provide the information requested in the attached letter.

SIGNED

Frank B. Berry, M.D.

Enclosure - 1

cc: Asst to Sec Def (Atomic Energy) ←  
(General Loper) w/encl and  
copy of reference

INFORMATION COPY

JUL 15 1960

FEDERAL RADIATION COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

JUL - 8 1960

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In the May 18, 1960 issue of the Federal Register there was published a Memorandum for the President from the Chairman of the Federal Radiation Council containing seven recommendations which were approved by the President for the guidance of Federal agencies on radiation protection standards. This action was pursuant to Executive Order 10831 and Public Law 86-373 which established the Federal Radiation Council to "advise the President with respect to radiation matters, directly or indirectly affecting health, including guidance for all Federal agencies in the formulation of radiation standards.

The Memorandum for the President and the Staff Report of the Federal Radiation Council, "Background Material for the Development of Radiation Protection Standards," copies of which are enclosed for your convenience, discuss in detail the method by which the recommendations of the Federal Radiation Council were developed. It was pointed out that the formulation of radiation protection standards involves a balancing of the risks to man of exposure to ionizing radiation against the benefits to be derived from the many important usages to which radiation is applied. The staff of the Council, in addition to conducting a careful review of the current information on the hazards of ionizing radiation, consulted with staff members of many of the Federal agencies concerned with radiation protection in order to define the problem areas to be provided for in recommended protection standards.

In order to provide continuing advice to the President on radiation protection standards, the Federal Radiation Council must have information from which it can determine the extent to which its recommendations represent an appropriate balance between the requirements of health protection and the beneficial uses of radiation and atomic energy. To this end, your assistance is requested.

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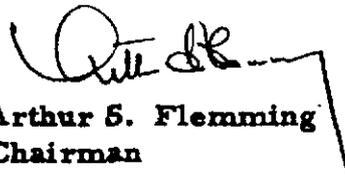
*Federal Rad Council*

Specifically, the Federal Radiation Council would like a report on radiation protection activities to be conducted by the Department of Defense under the Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal agencies promulgated by the President. In particular, the Council would like to be informed on the operating standards developed by your agency and if any deviations from the Guides are planned under the provisions of Recommendation 7 which states:

"The Guides may be exceeded only after the Federal agency having jurisdiction over the matter has carefully considered the reason for doing so in light of the recommendations in this paper."

On the basis of the reports received from the agencies, it is the plan of the Council to develop a regular mechanism for receiving such reports and we would welcome your suggestions on this matter. In order to expedite the development of a routine pattern, the Council would appreciate receiving the report from your agency by August 1, 1960. Any questions you may have about this report may be directed to the Secretary of the Federal Radiation Council, Dr. Donald R. Chadwick, Code 113, extension 2505.

Sincerely yours,



Arthur S. Flemming  
Chairman

The Honorable Thomas S. Gates, Jr.  
Secretary of Defense  
Washington 25, D. C.

# FEDERAL RADIATION COUNCIL

## RADIATION PROTECTION GUIDANCE FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

### Memorandum for the President

Pursuant to Executive Order 10831 and Public Law 86-373, the Federal Radiation Council has made a study of the hazards and use of radiation. We herewith transmit our first report to you concerning our findings and our recommendations for the guidance of Federal agencies in the conduct of their radiation protection activities.

It is the statutory responsibility of the Council to " . . . advise the President with respect to radiation matters, directly or indirectly affecting health, including guidance for all Federal agencies in the formulation of radiation standards and in the establishment and execution of programs of cooperation with States . . ."

Fundamentally, setting basic radiation protection standards involves passing judgment on the extent of the possible health hazard society is willing to accept in order to realize the known benefits of radiation. It involves inevitably a balancing between total health protection, which might require foregoing any activities increasing exposure to radiation, and the vigorous promotion of the use of radiation and atomic energy in order to achieve optimum benefits.

The Federal Radiation Council has reviewed available knowledge on radiation effects and consulted with scientists within and outside the Government. Each member has also examined the guidance recommended in this memorandum in light of his statutory responsibilities. Although the guidance does not cover all phases of radiation protection, such as internal emitters, we find that the guidance which we recommend that you provide for the use of Federal agencies gives appropriate consideration to the requirements of health protection and the beneficial uses of radiation and atomic energy. Our further findings and recommendations follow.

**Discussion.** The fundamental problem in establishing radiation protection guides is to allow as much of the beneficial uses of ionizing radiation as possible while assuring that man is not exposed to undue hazard. To get a true insight into the scope of the problem and the impact of the decisions involved, a review of the benefits and the hazards is necessary.

It is important in considering both the benefits and hazards of radiation to appreciate that man has existed throughout his history in a bath of natural radiation. This background radiation, which varies over the earth, provides a partial basis for understanding the effects of radiation on man and serves as an indicator of the ranges of radiation exposures within which the human population has developed and increased.

**The benefits of ionizing radiation.** Radiation properly controlled is a boon to mankind. It has been of inestimable value in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. It can provide sources of

energy greater than any the world has yet had available. In industry, it is used as a tool to measure thickness, quantity or quality, to discover hidden flaws, to trace liquid flow, and for other purposes. So many research uses for ionizing radiation have been found that scientists in many diverse fields now rank radiation with the microscope in value as a working tool.

**The hazards of ionizing radiation.** Ionizing radiation involves health hazards just as do many other useful tools. Scientific findings concerning the biological effects of radiation of most immediate interest to the establishment of radiation protection standards are the following:

1. Acute doses of radiation may produce immediate or delayed effects, or both.

2. As acute whole body doses increase above approximately 25 rems (units of radiation dose), immediately observable effects increase in severity with dose, beginning from barely detectable changes, to biological signs clearly indicating damage, to death at levels of a few hundred rems.

3. Delayed effects produced either by acute irradiation or by chronic irradiation are similar in kind, but the ability of the body to repair radiation damage is usually more effective in the case of chronic than acute irradiation.

4. The delayed effects from radiation are in general indistinguishable from familiar pathological conditions usually present in the population.

5. Delayed effects include genetic effects (effects transmitted to succeeding generations), increased incidence of tumors, lifespan shortening, and growth and development changes.

6. The child, the infant, and the unborn infant appear to be more sensitive to radiation than the adult.

7. The various organs of the body differ in their sensitivity to radiation.

8. Although ionizing radiation can induce genetic and somatic effects (effects on the individual during his lifetime other than genetic effects), the evidence at the present time is insufficient to justify precise conclusions on the nature of the dose-effect relationship at low doses and dose rates. Moreover, the evidence is insufficient to prove either the hypothesis of a "damage threshold" (a point below which no damage occurs) or the hypothesis of "no threshold" in man at low doses.

9. If one assumes a direct linear relation between biological effect and the amount of dose, it then becomes possible to relate very low dose to an assumed biological effect even though it is not detectable. It is generally agreed that the effect that may actually occur will not exceed the amount predicted by this assumption.

**Basic biological assumptions.** There are insufficient data to provide a firm basis for evaluating radiation effects for all types and levels of irradiation. There is particular uncertainty with respect to the biological effects at very low doses and low-dose rates. It is not prudent therefore to assume that there is a level of radiation exposure below which there is absolute certainty that no effect may occur. This consideration, in addition to the adoption of the conservative hypothesis of a linear relation between biological effect and the amount of dose, determines our basic approach to the formulation of radiation protection guides.

The lack of adequate scientific information makes it urgent that additional research be undertaken and new data developed to provide a firmer basis for evaluating biological risk. Appropriate member agencies of the Federal Radiation Council are sponsoring and encouraging research in these areas.

**Recommendations.** In view of the findings summarized above the following recommendations are made:

It is recommended that:

1. There should not be any man-made radiation exposure without the expectation of benefit resulting from such exposure. Activities resulting in man-made radiation exposure should be authorized for useful applications provided in recommendations set forth herein are followed.

It is recommended that:

2. The term "Radiation Protection Guide" be adopted for Federal use. This term is defined as the radiation dose which should not be exceeded without careful consideration of the reasons for doing so; every effort should be made to encourage the maintenance of radiation doses as far below this guide as practicable.

It is recommended that:

3. The following Radiation Protection Guides be adopted for normal peacetime operations:

Type of exposure	Condition	Dose (rem)
<b>Radiation worker:</b>		
(a) Whole body, head and trunk, active blood forming organs, gonads, or lens of eye.	Accumulated dose.....	5 times the number of years beyond age 18.
	13 weeks.....	3.
	Year.....	30.
(b) Skin of whole body and thyroid.....	13 weeks.....	10.
	Year.....	75.
(c) Hands and forearms, feet and ankles.....	13 weeks.....	25.
	Year.....	75.
(d) Bone.....	Body burden.....	0.1 microgram of radium-226 or its biological equivalent.
(e) Other organs.....	Year.....	15.
	13 weeks.....	5.
<b>Population:</b>		
(a) Individual.....	Year.....	0.5 (whole body).
(b) Average.....	30 year.....	5 (gonads).

The following points are made in relation to the Radiation Protection Guides herein provided:

(1) For the individual in the population, the basic Guide for annual whole body dose is 0.5 rem. This Guide ap-

plies when the individual whole body doses are known. As an operational technique, where the individual whole body doses are not known, a suitable sample of the exposed population should be developed whose protection guide for annual whole body dose will be 0.17 rem per capita per year. It is emphasized that this is an operational technique which should be modified to meet special situations.

(2) Considerations of population genetics impose a per capita dose limitation for the gonads of 5 rems in 30 years. The operational mechanism described above for the annual individual whole body dose of 0.5 rem is likely in the immediate future to assure that the gonadal exposure Guide (5 rem in 30 years) is not exceeded.

(3) These Guides do not differ substantially from certain other recommendations such as those made by the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurements, the National Academy of Sciences, and the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

(4) The term "maximum permissible dose" is used by the National Committee on Radiation Protection (NCRP) and the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). However, this term is often misunderstood. The words "maximum" and "permissible" both have unfortunate connotations not intended by either the NCRP or the ICRP.

(5) There can be no single permissible or acceptable level of exposure without regard to the reason for permitting the exposure. It should be general practice to reduce exposure to radiation, and positive effort should be carried out to fulfill the sense of these recommendations. It is basic that exposure to radiation should result from a real determination of its necessity.

(6) There can be different Radiation Protection Guides with different numerical values, depending upon the circumstances. The Guides herein recommended are appropriate for normal peacetime operations.

(7) These Guides are not intended to apply to radiation exposure resulting from natural background or the purposeful exposure of patients by practitioners of the healing arts.

(8) It is recognized that our present scientific knowledge does not provide a firm foundation within a factor of two or three for selection of any particular numerical value in preference to another value. It should be recognized that the Radiation Protection Guides recommended in this paper are well below the level where biological damage has been observed in humans.

It is recommended that:

4. Current protection guides used by the agencies be continued on an interim basis for organ doses to the population.

Recommendations are not made concerning the Radiation Protection Guides for individual organ doses to the population, other than the gonads. Unfortunately, the complexities of establishing guides applicable to radiation exposure of all body organs preclude the Council from making recommendations concern-

ing them at this time. However, current protection guides used by the agencies appear appropriate on an interim basis.

It is recommended that:

5. The term "Radioactivity Concentration Guide" be adopted for Federal use. This term is defined as the concentration of radioactivity in the environment which is determined to result in whole body or organ doses equal to the Radiation Protection Guide.

Within this definition, Radioactivity Concentration Guides can be determined after the Radiation Protection Guides are decided upon. Any given Radioactivity Concentration Guide is applicable only for the circumstances under which the use of its corresponding Radiation Protection Guide is appropriate.

It is recommended that:

6. The Federal agencies, as an interim measure, use radioactivity concentration guides which are consistent with the recommended Radiation Protection Guides. Where no Radiation Protection Guides are provided, Federal agencies continue present practices.

No specific numerical recommendations for Radioactivity Concentration Guides are provided at this time. However, concentration guides now used by the agencies appear appropriate on an interim basis. Where appropriate radioactivity concentration guides are not available, and where Radiation Protection Guides for specific organs are provided herein, the latter Guides can be used by the Federal agencies as a starting point for the derivation of radioactivity concentration guides applicable to their particular problems. The Federal Radiation Council has also initiated action directed towards the development of additional Guides for radiation protection.

It is recommended that:

7. The Federal agencies apply these Radiation Protection Guides with judgment and discretion, to assure that reasonable probability is achieved in the attainment of the desired goal of protecting man from the undesirable effects of radiation. The Guides may be exceeded only after the Federal agency having jurisdiction over the matter has carefully considered the reason for doing so in light of the recommendations in this paper.

The Radiation Protection Guides provide a general framework for the radiation protection requirements. It is expected that each Federal agency, by virtue of its immediate knowledge of its operating problems, will use these Guides as a basis upon which to develop detailed standards tailored to meet its particular requirements. The Council will follow the activities of the Federal agencies in this area and will promote the necessary coordination to achieve an effective Federal program.

If the foregoing recommendations are approved by you for the guidance of Federal agencies in the conduct of their radiation protection activities, it is further recommended that this memorandum be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

ARTHUR S. FLEMING,  
Chairman,  
Federal Radiation Council.

The recommendations numbered "1" through "7" contained in the above memorandum are approved for the guidance of Federal agencies, and the memorandum shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

MAY 13, 1960.

[P.R. Doc. 60-4539; Filed, May 17, 1960;  
8:51 a.m.]