

MEDEW-IM 1st Ind
 SUBJECT: Overexposure to Ionizing Radiation

HQ, BAMC, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, 4 MAR 1963

TO: The Surgeon General, ATTN: MEDPS-PO, Department of the
 Army, Washington 25, D. C.

The cause of excessive radiation has been investigated with the following findings:

a. On 13 February 1963 a message from the Commanding Officer, Sacramento Signal Depot, Sacramento, California, informed that Pvt Robert M. Foss, Jr., BR 17 654 169 received an overdose of radiation during the period 12 November 1962 to 18 January 1963 (1.345 REMS, and the allowable dose is 1.200 REMS for a four-week period).

b. No x-rays are taken on dental specialist students in the Dental Department during their course of instruction at the Medical Field Service School. Each student takes a total of thirty, 3 second exposures on intra-oral x-ray films which are positioned on a skull mounted on a dental chair. Each exposure is taken at 5 milliamperes for a total of 450 milliampere seconds during the entire period of instruction extending over eight weeks. During the past three years there has been a total of 1500 students and out of this total not more than four have received a dosimeter reading of .002 or .003 REMS. The Dental X-Ray Clinic is so constructed that students must stand outside a lead-lined booth in order to operate the x-ray machine. This fact suggests that Pvt Foss dropped his badge inside the booth or inadvertently placed it there while attaching the x-ray film to the skull. It is therefore felt that although the film badge indicates an overdose of radiation, the student was not exposed to it.

c. To preclude a recurrence of this type incident in the future, more emphasis will be placed on radiation hazards and the importance of observing all possible safety precautions. The number of instructors will also be increased to afford more supervision in the X-ray Section.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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