

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : C. L. Dunham, M.D., Director
Division of Biology and Medicine, Headquarters

DATE: May 21, 1959

FROM : S. Allan Lough, Director
Health and Safety Laboratory, New York

S. Allan Lough

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION OF CHANGE IN STRONTIUM 90 ANALYTICAL PROGRAM

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SYMBOL: HS:SAL

Since sending to you my May 18, 1959 memorandum, "Strontium 90 Analytical Program", I have had telephone conversations on the general problem with both Hal Hollister and John Whitnah. In view of these conversations, it appears that the May 18 memorandum is not explicit enough to convey my attitude and I should like to restate the position of the HASL with regard to the strontium 90 analytical program.

Analytical data received from the present contractors are far from satisfactory, even though we are now operating under revised contracts which provide much more rigid control of quality than was possible before. The results returned by the contractors under the new plan contain so many unsatisfactory values, as judged by deviations between blind duplicates, etc., that I believe we would need to divide every sample and hence pay a double price for the analysis of each sample in order to be sure of reasonable accuracy on any samples. Even if this expensive program were pursued, current results indicate clearly that agreement between blind duplicates would not be obtained in many cases and although the Commission would not be required to pay for the analyses which were not in agreement, both time and sample material would be lost in the program.

On the basis of this deplorable situation, reached after several years of effort to establish satisfactory relationships with the analytical contractors, the HASL must emphatically recommend that all analytical work in the strontium program be done at HASL, except for samples of the following types:

1. Rainfall samples collected at the three precipitation stations.
2. Upper air samples now being analyzed at Tracerlab-West and Nuclear Science and Engineering.
3. Human bone samples in the Kulp program.

In order to analyze the samples to be withdrawn from the contractors in the current sampling program, HASL will need two additional chemists.

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allout sampling program is expanded along the lines and to the extent discussed in my conversation with Mr. Hollister (which was based

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upon a memorandum which I understand has been submitted to you), HASL will need still more analytical chemists. For each 25% increase in the sample load we will need two chemists. Additional secretarial help will be needed also. If the analytical load rose by 25% to 50% we would need one additional secretary.

Mr. Hollister has indicated that in the revised Sunshine program there is a proposal to increase the HASL staff by two scientifically trained persons qualified to collate and interpret data developed by analyses at HASL. These two scientists would be needed whether the sampling program is increased in scope or left at its present level.

I request an early reply from you to indicate whether you approve of the recommendation that HASL assume increased responsibility for analyses as outlined above so that, if you do accept and approve the recommendation, HASL can prepare in the near future a supplementary budget request for the additional people required.

cc: H. Hollister, DBM, Headquarters
J. Whitnah, DBM, Headquarters