

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : N. H. Woodruff, Assistant Manager for Operations, ORO DATE: October 13, 1955

FROM : Paul C. Aebersold, Director, Isotopes Division, ORO

SUBJECT: MANAGER'S MEETING - NOVEMBER 3-4, 1955

SYMBOL: OI:GLH

Reference is made to memorandum of October 7 from W. R. McCauley, Jr.

The attached memorandum regarding coordination of and responsibility for the isotopes program, is pertinent to Item 2(a) of the proposed agenda. Additional details concerning our functions and responsibilities as regards promotion and education in the byproduct material field are discussed below.

We would point out that the Isotopes Division has been authorizing or licensing the possession and use of radioisotopes or byproduct materials since the beginning of the radioisotope distribution program in 1946. Our licensing and radiological safety activities have been directed primarily at assuring that radioisotopes are used in a manner that will not jeopardize health and safety. On the other hand we have striven to make a wide variety of radioisotopes available, to anticipate the needs of isotope users in this respect, to assist users in setting up sound radiological safety programs.

A good balance has been maintained between regulatory controls and activities to encourage and facilitate the wider use of radioisotopes. As noted in the attached memorandum our Technical Developments Branch prepares special safety reports, compiles statistical data and other information and prepares educational aids which are highly useful to Division personnel and other AEC offices. Only a small additional effort is required to make this information available to radioisotope users.

As a result of the licensing and visitation program the Division has become intimately acquainted with the problems of radioisotope users and related industries. Having the benefit of practical knowledge of field problems obtained through day to day contacts the Division is in a unique position to keep abreast of latest developments in techniques, new uses of radioisotopes, and problems which may arise.

Although less than 10% of the Division workload consists of education or promotion, such activities have been highly effective in encouraging and assisting in the rapid growth of radioisotope uses. Whereas the

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Reactor Development Division is responsible for promoting and developing practical and safe reactors, no single Division exercises a corresponding function with respect to byproduct materials. The Research Division is interested in some isotope uses; B & M is primarily concerned with medical uses, etc. It would appear desirable to recognize the importance of the educational or informational activities with regard to byproduct materials and formally place this function with the Isotopes Division.

Because of the AEC-wide nature of the byproduct material distribution program, the Isotopes Division deals directly or indirectly with a number of AEC facilities (Item 2(c) of the Agenda). In general, the relationships have been satisfactory; however, several problems have arisen with regard to coordination of production and pricing of radioisotopes and radiation services. In order that reactors will be used for those purposes for which they are best fitted, and do not compete with each other, it is most important that prices and fees be established and applied on a uniform basis and that one office coordinate such pricing. In a number of instances exaggerated public claims about byproduct materials (such as Thulium 170 X-ray units) have been made without checking with the Isotopes Division. Catalogs discussing isotopes and related services, authorization or licensing procedures, etc. have been printed without prior review by the Isotopes Division. A considerable portion of such text has been erroneous or obsolete.

In addition to Isotopes Division review of proposed isotopes programs at the time a user files an application for a license, certain of the AEC facilities have requested this same information before accepting an order. Facilities have attempted to apply terms and conditions that either overlap with the terms and conditions on Form AEC-313 or are in conflict with such terms. The Isotopes Division developed Form AEC-375 which all Federal agencies use in purchasing radioisotopes from AEC facilities. The Division has also drafted an Isotope Order Form for use by all other persons buying materials or services from AEC facilities. This form should replace the varied purchase orders and stipulations now in use.

We would like to urge adoption of procedures for coordinating all matters related to isotope production, distribution, pricing, promotion, training, information and regulation in a single Division.


Paul C. Aebersold

Enclosure:
Memo to N. H. Woodruff

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