



Department of Energy

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MINUTES OF MARSHALL ISLANDS PLANNING GROUP MEETING HELD OCTOBER 14, 1987

I want to thank each of you for taking the time to attend this meeting and to address the large number of items on the agenda. It seems there is always a crossroads for Marshall Islands programs and now is no exception. I'd like to summarize, to the extent possible, where we stand on each program in general and on certain specific items.

MEDICAL PROGRAM

DOE will probably be officially tasked by the Interagency Group on Freely Associated States Affairs (IGFASA) with continuance of the special monitoring program for at least the next several years. Funding is included in the Department's FY 89 budget request and DOE HQ probably will approve continued funding. Recognizing that the 177 Health Care Program, separately funded out of the Compact for the people of Rongelap, Utrik, Enewetak, and Bikini, is just now getting underway, every effort must be made by DOE and Brookhaven to work closely with them with the ultimate goal of having BNL provide only that monitoring, follow-up, and treatment which cannot effectively be provided by the RMI Government. Since this 177 system exists, and it includes funds for medical referrals, we should make every effort to have exposed persons referred for outside the Marshalls treatment, through 177 except for cases that are reasonably construed to be radiation relatable. This must involve good communications between BNL, PASO, RMI, and the 177 Health Plan personnel.

FY 1988 funding is targeted at \$850K, not including medical referral costs in PASO's budget. Departmental constraints may further adversely impact that figure.

BNL RADIOLOGICAL SAFETY PROGRAM

A very strong consensus was reached that a whole body counting/urine analysis program must be conducted for several years to verify dose predictions for returning Bikinians, and later the Enjebi people. While the source of funding may be an open issue, the need for the program is not. BNL stated that experienced personnel to conduct such a program probably would not be available after January 1, 1988, because there has been no such requirement by DOE for the past two years, therefore no funding to keep qualified people available.

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At DOE request, BNL presented a five year work plan for Bikini/Enjebi/Rongelap. That plan will be used to reply to the counsel for the Bikinians who asked DOE for recommendations on what should be done beyond FY 1988. DOE does not assume it will be tasked with the job, although that is a strong possibility. These recommendations will be made known to the Department of State (OFASA) and the RMI government.

FY 88 funding is targeted at \$300K for PU track-etch analysis. Departmental constraints may further adversely impact that figure.

LLNL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

Another strong consensus was reached in that a follow-on program at Bikini and Enjebi is absolutely necessary as a "report card" on our predictions, assessments, and remedial recommendations. Only with a follow-on can these be effectively improved or otherwise modified. For example, if the proven concept of "environmental half-life" is better quantified, there could be a profound dollar impact on long term remedial requirements at Bikini, Enjebi, and quite possibly Rongelap.

The five year work plan presented will also be used as part of the reply to the Bikinians' counsel.

OTHER

DOE Chartered Vessel

In the near term (five years) a ship supported medical program is necessary for many reasons. These include elders who cannot or will not leave their islands, marginal air service, and size and storage requirements for diagnostic equipment. Efforts will continue to utilize Marshall Islands Government vessels (Marimed) for as much of our program as possible, although calendar year 1989 would be the earliest that could be accomplished. In the meantime, it appears that the Bikinians, through DOI, may well request DOE ship use on a reimbursable basis, to support the Bikini resettlement project. This cost sharing could make an even stronger case to retain a chartered vessel.

Prospects are that DOE and DOE supported programs will require a dedicated vessel for at least five more years (FY 89-93).

University of Washington Thyroid Paper

Dr. Adams and colleagues have done some analysis on this publication and there are many unanswered questions about the survey and surveyors. Dr. Adams, at DOE request, addressed this paper in a meeting with RMI Government officials in Majuro in September. Basically, he suggested that thyroid problems were not related to long term exposure and enumerated the various types of tumors and what they mean clinically.

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Dr. Kohn stated he had several questions he would pose to the author (Dr. Tom Hamilton) since he (Kohn) has been hired by RMI to assess DOE Rongelap work. Dr. Adams will also contact Dr. Hamilton for further elaboration on assumptions, the survey, and conclusions.

Any further discussion/reaction by DOE will depend on several factors, including the results of Drs. Kohn and Adams' discussion.

DOI Plans

1. DOI will not include funding for Bikini in its FY 89 submittal, however, since there is a very substantial possibility that the Bikinians and the Administration will soon agree to settle the lawsuit in exchange for Administration support to resettle, DOI may submit a supplemental request (FY 88).
2. Bikinians, DOI, State, Justice, etc., are very seriously exploring a trust fund managed by the Bikinians as a very attractive means to settle what will inevitably be a subjective and emotional suite of clean up options.
3. There will be no new BARC funding in FY 89.
4. Enewetak (see following).
5. Bikini Field Station (see following).

Enewetak

DOI, with the support of DOE and H&N Pacific Operations, will operate a two year (FY 88-89) hands on training program which will turn over the food, motor sailer, and agriculture programs to the RMI government and Enewetak community. This has been something DOE has been advocating for several years and now has the support of all interested parties. DOE/H&N involvement in running a field station should be terminated by the end of FY 89 and a retrograde/disposal/cleanup program should be completed by September 30, 1989.

Enjebi

The revised LLNL dose assessment will be published about November 20. The text of the transmittal to RMI was discussed in the context of past reports (Enyu) and how they were delivered. Roger Ray was tasked with drafting the transmittal. It was agreed that the report should officially be transmitted to RMI from the Department of State (OFASA).

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Bikini Field Station

FY 88 will be the final year that DOE funds the field station (\$380K). DOI through H&N corporate (the Bikinians project manager) plans to take over the facility to support the fertilization program, and the Bikini dock project. If LLNL or any other U.S. agency requires support after FY 88, it will be provided by DOI on a mission by mission, reimbursable basis. This will result in substantial savings to DOE.

Rongelap

Dr. Kohn, as an independent consultant to RMI for Rongelap, has as his consultants BARC members, Dr. Poretsky, Dr. Dunster, Dr. Adelstein (VP of NCRP) and Dr. Jack Schull. He also agreed that the Rongelap people could select other consultants to comment on his report. They selected Sister Rosalie Bertell, Dr. Franke and Ms. Boikat. If they disagree with Dr. Kohn's report they will submit minority notes. The report should be completed by April 1988.

PU Contributor to DOSE

I have had an uncomfortable feeling arising out of BNL and LLNL differences in measured and predicted dose from PU. I asked LLNL and BNL to initiate a dialog to either resolve the differences or advise DOE what significant differences exist so we may determine other means to address the issue.

Tasking: LLNL to initiate dialog with BNL to address differences with written reports from both laboratories to DOE (Chairman, Marshall Islands Programs) on unresolved significant differences, if any, with suggestions as to resolution. Completion target December 1, 1987.

Funding Sources

In addition to the obvious DOE, DOI or other federal agencies sources, RMI under P.L. 99-239 has the following funding avenues available to obtain technical assistance for radiation related matters:

1. 177 Agreement - \$2 million annually for 15 years for health care, and may include "dosimetry and bioassay services".
2. \$1 million per year for three years for "medical surveillance and radiological monitoring".
3. Annual proceeds not required under Sections 1-6 of the 177 agreement can be used for technical assistance, among other things.

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Summary

1. Medical program with ship support will continue for the foreseeable future, most likely DOE funded. Every effort will be made to turn over to RMI components of the program not specifically related to the exposed population and radiation effects. DOE HQ (MA) and NV will again try to have DOE involvement formalized through State.
2. A dedicated vessel will most likely be required for at least five years.
3. DOE program support to DOI at Enewetak terminates September 30, 1989.
4. DOE does not intend to fund Bikini field station beyond FY 1988.
5. LLNL and BNL will continue discussions to resolve PU issue.
6. The whole body counting capability at BNL will be lost in FY 88 if funding is not made available.
7. It is a unilateral interest of the U.S. to conduct a radiological monitoring program for the returning Bikinians and later the Enjebi people.
8. Funding sources for follow on verification work at Bikini and Enjebi (\pm \$1 million annually) or a radiological safety program (\pm \$1 million annually) have not been identified.
9. DOE most likely will fund the medical program (\pm \$1 million) and logistics support (\pm \$1 million) for the next several years.
10. Roger Ray to draft Enjebi dose transmittal.
11. Dr. Adams to seek more information from Dr. Hamilton on thyroid paper.
12. John Rudolph and Harry Brown to brief OFASA in November.

Thank you again for your contribution at the meeting and for your ongoing assistance in keeping these complex programs on track.


Harry U. Brown, Chairman
Marshall Islands Planning Group

cc:
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