

JUL 20 1979

Mr. Richard L. Williams  
Office for Micronesian Status  
Negotiations  
Room 3356  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Dear Mr. Williams:

In March of this year, the Department of Energy, in response to a Congressional request, provided the first information on the status of progress with the Northern Marshalls radiological survey. In briefings of staff of the Department of the Interior and others, we indicated that survey field operations were conducted in the Marshalls in September-November 1978, and that the first available results would be aerial measurements of external radiation. The source of this external radiation is fallout radioactivity in island soil from U.S. nuclear explosives tests in the Pacific. This radiation also includes some contribution from worldwide fallout from atmospheric tests conducted by other nations. The aerial measurements are corrected for altitude so that they may be used in development of estimates of doses to persons who live on the islands. In reporting on survey progress, it was stated that many months of laboratory work on collected samples, and on analysis of these results, would be required before estimates of radiation dose due to radioactivity in food would be completed. Dose from radioactivity in food is expected to be a significant fraction of the total dose.

Maps were distributed in March showing the range of external radiation levels for each of the 13 individual islands and atolls that were surveyed. Also, maps showing how external radiation levels change from place to place on Bikini and Eneu Islands at Bikini Atoll have been distributed. Analysis of this data was a priority effort. Additional information updating progress in analyzing external radiation measurements was to be available in July of this year.

The following is an update of progress since last March:

1. A map has been prepared showing terrestrial external radiation levels for a number of locations in the U.S. This use of the term terrestrial means that this source of radiation exposure for the U.S. population includes the naturally occurring radioactivity contained in soil and rocks, plus fallout, but excludes cosmic radiation. This information will permit comparison of external radiation levels from fallout for the survey islands and atolls presented in March with external radiation levels in the United States.
2. Summary information is being prepared giving average external radiation levels contributed by fallout from nuclear testing for each island surveyed. This data will be available in August 1979. A summary sheet of these data is being prepared for each of the 13 islands and atolls surveyed.
3. The specific radionuclides contributing to external radiation levels have now been identified for each island surveyed.
4. Graphic material is being produced that shows the location and name of each survey island keyed to the data on island external radiation levels in item 2 above.

The following schedule is provided to indicate when results of the analysis of data are expected to be completed, and when formal reports of the survey are anticipated:

#### External Radiation

1. Status information - March '79 (already provided).
2. Status information update - July '79 (this letter).
3. Summary report - January-March '80.
4. Final report with all graphics - July-September '80.

Marine Survey

- 1. Analysis of data completed - October-December '79.
- 2. Report on marine survey - January-March '80.

Terrestrial Survey

- 1. Analysis of data completed - January-March '80.

Bikini Atoll and Rongelap Atoll Surveys

- 1. Final reports for all assessments - January-March '80.

Dose Assessments for all Atolls

- 1. Completion of all dose calculations - April-June '80.
- 2. Final report for all assessments - October-December '80.

We would be pleased to answer any questions regarding these results or the progress of the survey.

Sincerely,

James L. Liverman  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Environment

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*TFM*

*OECC*

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*on leave 7/20*

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7/19/79    7/19/79    7/19/79    7/19/79    7/19/79    7/19/79    7/19/79    7/20/79