

N259. Nuclear Plant Discharges Too Low to Detect

The Atomic Energy Control Board's (AECB) annual report was brought to the table in the House of Commons in June. In it, Canada's nuclear power reactors have been pronounced acceptably safe by the regulatory authority. However, the report notes there were 620 unusual events during 1992, of which 259 required a formal report to the AECB. The report also points out that of about 7,015 nuclear generating station workers who were exposed to radiation, none received a radiation dose greater than the legal limit of 30 mSv in a three-month period or 50 mSv per year. The average dose per worker was 2.5 mSv.

Doses from discharges at all power plants were found to be very low. They varied from 0.001 mSv/y to 0.019 mSv/y for people living near the stations. As of March 31, 1993, there were 3,743 licenses in effect for the use of radioisotopes in medicine, research, and industry. AECB inspectors carried out 3,297 inspections of licenses and identified 1,534 major infractions that could have affected radiation safety.

Inspectors undertook 106 investigations of unusual situations, issued three stop-work orders and initiated a number of prosecutions. Eleven of them were completed during 1992-93, of which nine were successful, with one case against a company pending.

Taken from, "Nuclear Plant Discharges Too Low To Detect," from AECB Reporter, Summer 1993, p.8. For detailed information and copies of the AECB Annual Report 1992-93, contact AECB (613/995-5894), Office of Public Information, P.O. Box 1046, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5S9, Canada.