



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER TO USEC ON EMPLOYEE PROTECTION TRAINING AT GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT IN KENTUCKY

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Confirmatory Order to the United States Enrichment Corporation to confirm commitments from the company to ensure that training related to employee protection at its Paducah, Ky, gaseous diffusion uranium enrichment plant will be adequately addressed.

In December of 2002, the NRC initiated an investigation to determine whether a manager at USEC's Paducah facility was discriminated against by being suspended and later terminated for raising safety concerns. The investigation was expanded in May of 2003 to determine whether the same manager was discriminated against, in retaliation for the previously raised safety concerns, by not being considered for a position with a contractor performing work for USEC at Paducah. The NRC did not substantiate that the manager was suspended or terminated because of raising safety concerns but expressed concern that discrimination may have occurred due to the manager's not being later considered for a contract position.

In September of 2003, the NRC notified USEC of its concern and offered the company a choice of either attending a predecisional NRC enforcement conference or requesting alternative dispute resolution before a neutral mediator in order to reach agreement on resolving the concern. The company chose the dispute resolution alternative. The NRC and USEC agreed that the NRC would issue a Confirmatory Order under which company actions will focus on safety conscious work environment training for managers of USEC contractors at Paducah and USEC managers who are principal points of contact for contractors at the plant.

The NRC believes that its concerns can be resolved through effective implementation of USEC's commitments.

A copy of a January 27 letter and its enclosures, from the NRC to USEC, will be available on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The Adams Accession Number is ML050270260.

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