



Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
Commission canadienne de sûreté nucléaire

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Directorate of Nuclear Cycle
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June 6, 2008

Mr. John Miller
Port Hope, Ontario
E-mail: semiller@sympatico.ca

Subject: CNSC Staff's Response to Your Letter of May 21, 2008

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you for your letter dated May 21, 2008. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) staff has reviewed your letter and offers the following response:

In July 2007, uranium contamination was discovered under Cameco's Port Hope uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) plant building. CNSC staff, in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment staff, has been monitoring Cameco's corrective actions and remedial measures since this discovery, through monthly inspections, meetings and reports.

As part of its regulatory oversight, CNSC staff obtained Cameco's most recent groundwater and harbour water quality monitoring data shortly before the May 14, 2008 Commission's meeting in Ajax, Ontario. That information indicated that although trace amounts of contaminants from the UF₆ plant had reached the harbour's turning basin, there were no indications that water quality in the harbour had changed.

As you may know, CNSC staff required Cameco to submit a remediation plan to address the contamination of soil and groundwater underneath the UF₆ plant building. On December 20, 2007, Cameco submitted its remediation plan for CNSC staff's review and acceptance. The review of Cameco's remediation plan took into account the structural integrity of the existing UF₆ plant building. CNSC staff accepted one of the options proposed by Cameco that addressed the CNSC requirement; to prevent an unreasonable risk to the environment.

The responsibility to enforce Section 36 of the *Fisheries Act* with respect to the deposition of deleterious substances entering waterbodies belongs to Environment Canada. The CNSC has been in contact with Environment Canada since Cameco reported discovering contamination beneath the UF₆ building and was informed on May 7, 2008 that a groundwater plume had reached the western shoreline of the harbour.

CNSC staff, during the Commission meeting on May 14, stated that they have verified that the interim groundwater controls and treatment systems are in place by Cameco and there is no immediate risk to the environment or the general public.

In CNSC staff's opinion, Cameco is, currently, meeting its obligations outlined in paragraphs 12(1)(c) and 12(1)(f) of the CNSC's *General Nuclear Safety and Control Regulations*.

If you have any questions related to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,



Henry Rabski, P. Eng.
Director General

c.c.: A. Oliver, (Cameco)
M. Longpre (Ontario Ministry of the Environment)
E. Lopez (Environment Canada)
C. Cannon (Municipality of Port Hope)