

Bill



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

January 6, 1994

← Misdated
It was signed out
January 6, 1995

His Excellency Wilfred I. Kendall
Ambassador of the Republic of
the Marshall Islands
Embassy of the Republic of
the Marshall Islands
2433 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

This is in further response to your letter dated August 19, 1994, regarding your eighth question on tracer chemicals used with weapons that were tested and the potential health consequences of each.

We have been working with the Department's Office of Defense Programs who holds this data and they have researched this issue. They have completed a review of weapons testing documentation at one weapons laboratory. Their search includes data pertinent to the 67 atmospheric nuclear weapons tests detonated on or near the Marshall Islands for the tracer chemicals that are known to have been placed near the weapon detonation to diagnose weapon performance.

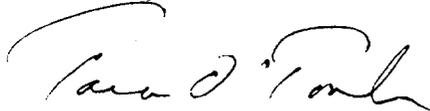
The enclosed table is a partial list of the tracer chemicals identified so far during the Department's research effort. An additional search is also ongoing at an additional weapons laboratory that may result in the identification of other chemicals that were used in these tests. While the test by test quantity of tracer materials is classified, the total cumulative amount used in all the tests is not. As soon as our search is completed, I will ensure that data on the cumulative quantities of all tracers are provided to you.

It may not be possible to provide any comment on what health impacts such relatively small quantities of these chemicals might pose to people living or returning to atolls affected by fallout since a complete chemical analysis of soils in the Marshall Islands was not conducted.

If any additional data is found to assist in this analysis, we will provide it to you with our interpretation of possible health effects. It appears our departmental records are not capable of providing a more definitive analysis.

I hope the identification of these chemicals will be of assistance to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and will help you and your Government better assess the potential environmental impacts associated with weapons testing in the Marshall Islands.

Sincerely,



Tara O'Toole, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health

Enclosure

cc w/enclosure:

The Honorable George Miller, Chairman,
Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Don Young
Ranking Minority Member

Ambassador David Fields,
Majuro, Marshall Islands

Mr. Franklin P. Huddle, Department of State,
Pacific Islands Affairs

Cumulative External Tracer Materials Included in Weapons
Detonated on or Near the Marshall Islands

Tracer Chemical

Total Cumulative Quantity (grams)
(In all 67 weapons)

sulfur
arsenic
yttrium
rhodium
indium
tantalum
tungsten
gold
thallium
polonium-210
thorium-230
thorium-232
uranium-233
uranium-238
americium-241
curium-242

Gram quantities for each chemical
will be provided at a later date.