Moeller & Associates, Inc., began to build a machine capable of completing in excess of 8,000 dose reconstructions per year. In addition to the dose reconstructions themselves, the ORAU Team also has to create and manage computer databases, receive and review individual monitoring records, perform dose reconstruction research, conduct telephone interviews with claimants, and provide technical and administrative support to NIOSH. Based on our proposal, we established six task groups, each of which includes health physicists with specific experience in occupational dosimetry or closely related fields. Management challenges have included creating a fifty-person facility in Cincinnati from scratch, implementing a conflict-of-interest management plan, developing a comprehensive quality assurance program, changing the typical dosimetrist mind-set, and finding health physicists with good "people" skills. Lessons learned include the needs to plan for expansion (and contraction) in all areas, maintain centralized control over decentralized execution, build defensibility into every process, and develop openness and transparency to address stakeholders' concerns.

*(Work supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health under contract no. 200-2002-00593.)

TAM-D.5

FLOW OF CLAIMS THROUGH THE DOSE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS.* J.P. Griffin (MJW Corporation Inc., 338 Harris Hill Road, Williamsville, NY 14221)

The dose reconstruction of EEOICPA claims requires the performance of more than 100 discrete process steps. These activities include the assembly of personnel monitoring data, review of site characterization data, conduct of the claimant interview, and performance of the actual reconstruction of internal and external dose. NIOSH staff health physicists processed a number of compensation claims to completion during the initial development stages of the dose reconstruction program. That effort involved an individual NIOSH health physicist performing each step required for complete dose reconstruction. While this system was invaluable for the development of dose reconstruction methodology and guidance documents, it would not provide the claims processing capacity to meet the program needs. A program objective to process more than 200 claims per week has been established to clear the existing case backlog and provide an acceptable turnaround time for newly submitted claims. The pool of available health physicists, possessing the broad expertise required for the individual approach, is inadequate to meet this program objective. Therefore, a compartmentalized system of claims processing has been established in which each task is performed sequentially by individuals possessing the skills and expertise needed for that particular function. This allows health physicists to focus on the tasks requiring their expertise while permitting others to perform those tasks that do not require that qualification. Health physicists may also be assigned tasks within their areas of specialty and for which they are most qualified. Additional objectives of the claims processing model are to enhance dose reconstruction efficiency and accuracy by providing feedback mechanisms for lessons learned, allow for immediate identification of claim status, and to both track and meet the various contractually required claims processing metrics.

*(Work supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health under contract no. 200-2002-00593.)

TAM-D.6

COMPUTER ASSISTED TELEPHONE INTERVIEW IN SUPPORT OF EEOICPA DOSE RECONSTRUCTION.* M.C. McFee, R.P. Weaver, and J.P. Griffin (MJW Corporation Inc., 338 Harris Hill Road, Suite 208, Williamsville, NY 14221)

The process of estimating occupational radiation exposure has many facets. Certain workers with cancer who supported the development of atomic weapons in the United States, or their survivors in cases where workers are deceased, are known as claimants under the Energy Employee Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). An important aspect of reconstructing a worker's dose is a one on one interview with the claimant. In addition to records maintained by the Department of Energy and its predecessor organizations, personal contact with the claimant can uncover information that might not have been recorded elsewhere. An Office of Management and Budget approved interview script is used to ensure consistency of information gathered, but the claimant is also allowed to comment on his/her recollection of their radiation exposure environment. A report of the interview is forwarded to the claimant for review or comments. This report is then combined with established records of occupational exposure, reviewed, and assigned to a health physicist for dose reconstruction. In addition to augmenting the records from the DOE or its contractors, which in the early days of the atomic weapons programs might have been sparse, this process allows the claimant to participate in the process of dose reconstruction.

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CONTENTS

FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE HEALTH PHYSICS SOCIETY
20–24 July 2003
San Diego, California

Abstracts of Papers Presented at the Meeting

Events Calendar ..... Appears at the front of this issue

Plenary Session (MAM) S147
Monday Poster Session (P) S148
Monday Afternoon (MPM) S186

Tuesday Morning (TAM) S200
Tuesday Afternoon (TPM) S214

Wednesday Morning (WAM) S227
Wednesday Afternoon (WPM) S244

Thursday Morning (THAM) S257

Author Index to Abstracts S273

On the cover: A panda at the San Diego Zoo. Photo courtesy of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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