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Tritium Awareness Project (TAP)

Michael Binder, President,
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission,
280 Slater Street, PO Box 1046 Station B,
Ottawa Ontario K1P 5S9

February 16 2009

Dear Mr. Binder:

FILE	7-03-02
DOSSIER	1-8-4.
REFERRED TO	Armstrong, A.
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The public and the House of Commons have been given assurances by the Minister of Natural Resources that no radioactivity has leaked into the Ottawa River as a result of the heavy water spill at Chalk River's NRU reactor on December 5 2008.

Our information suggests that trillions of becquerels of tritium had already been released into the atmosphere when these assurances were given, some of which would surely find its way into the Ottawa River, and tens of trillions of becquerels of tritium in liquid form are being released (or have already been released) into the Ottawa River by Chalk River authorities, with the permission of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, as a direct result of the heavy water spill at the NRU reactor on December 5, 2008.

We believe that the public has the right to know the amount of tritium that has been released into the environment as a result of this accidental spill and subsequent management decisions by AECL and CNSC authorities. Please provide the correct figures for the total amount of tritium (in becquerels) released into the atmosphere and the total amount of tritium (in becquerels) released or planned to be released into the Ottawa River as a result of the December 5 incident.

We also believe that CNSC Commissioners are being misled by CNSC staff when they are told (in CMD 09-M7) that " monitoring of radioactivity in the Ottawa River has indicated comparable average concentrations up and down stream of the CRL site in the Ottawa River."

Our information is that concentrations of tritium in the Ottawa River just downstream from CRL (at the site boundary) are at least 30 times greater than they are at the upstream CRL site boundary, and that tritium levels further downstream (from Harrington Bay to Pembroke and beyond) are at least twice the levels of tritium upstream from CRL. Why is CNSC staff not communicating accurate information to the Commissioners?

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Yours very truly,

Gordon Edwards, Ph.D.,
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For the Tritium Awareness Project

cc. Minister of Natural Resources
Mayors of Ottawa, Pembroke, and Petawawa