

Textbook Example Illustrating Whistleblower Allegations

Last year, on Oct. 28th, some used fuel at the Chalk River facility (CNL, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories) dropped into the fuel pool.

It took a while to figure out what the deal was.

Turns out there were defective welds on the “fuel caddy assembly.”

Why defective?

Well, the people who did the welds were not properly qualified. The welds were defective or shoddy, & there had been improper quality assurance at the U.S. company where the fuel caddies were manufactured.

It took a while to figure all this out, of course.

The issue?

Although there are CNSC staff who work on-site at the Chalk River facility, they were not notified of the incident for four weeks.

CNSC tribunal members?

They were notified 3 months later.

& they were notified because a member of the “activist” public had learned of this from a U.S. colleague who watches the U.S. NRC (Nuclear Regulatory Commission) reporting site where incidents of all kinds are reported.

& this (Canadian) activist queried the CNSC about it just before their Jan. 28th meeting.

It looks as though the tribunal members might never have been notified at all without this concerned – & well-informed – member of the public asking a question about this in the week leading up to the Jan. 28th CNSC meeting.

You can read the transcript of the Jan. 28th meeting. <http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/the-commission/pdf/2016-01-28%20-%20Meeting%20Transcript%20FINAL-e.pdf> (starts pg. 63.)

I see this incident & how it was handled as a textbook example of what the CNSC staff whistleblowers were articulating in their letter earlier this year.

CNSC tribunal members are making decisions based on faulty & incomplete safety data.

CNSC staff – & in many cases OPG or AECL/CNL staff – are not informing the tribunal of what they need to know in order to make proper, fully-informed decisions on nuclear safety matters.