



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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The roles of the Department of Transportation and the Atomic Energy Commission in the transportation of radioactive materials were spelled out in a Memorandum of Understanding signed today by Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar and Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Dixy Lee Ray

The memorandum was signed during a ceremony at the Department of Transportation. Under its provisions, the Department of Transportation will continue to regulate the handling and shipping of radioactive material, while the evaluation and approval of certain packages will be transferred to the Atomic Energy Commission.

"We believe this agreement will eliminate duplication of effort and more clearly define regulatory responsibility," Secretary Brinegar said. "This kind of close working relationship between agencies should serve as a source of confidence for all concerned -- shippers, travelers, and the general public. We are helping to insure protection for all."

Speaking for the AEC, Dr. Ray said, "Safety in the shipment of radioactive material is the overriding concern of both the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Transportation. As the number of shipments of radioactive materials has grown, it has become more and more important to give detailed attention to the problems associated with transporting radioactive material. In this agreement, AEC takes on as a direct responsibility a job that it has been doing for the Department of Transportation, and both agencies can now concentrate their efforts more fully on individual parts of the shipping process. Both the public and the nuclear and transportation industries should benefit."

Requirements for containers used in shipping radioactive materials vary according to quantity, type, and form of material. The Department of Transportation will set the standards for packages used in the smaller quantity shipments which require containers that must withstand the normal rigors of handling and transport.

The Atomic Energy Commission will set standards, review, and approve all containers used for fissionable materials and larger quantities of other

materials. Containers for these materials must withstand the normal rigors of transportation as well as severe accidents.

The Department of Transportation, as the National Competent Authority for the United States, will continue to be responsible for issuing package certifications for material being exported and for revalidating containers approved by foreign nations.

The memorandum supercedes a 1966 agreement between the Atomic Energy Commission and the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The full text of the Memorandum of Understanding will be published in the Federal Register.

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