

18 January 2010

Chem-Bio News

1. US DEFENSE SPY CHIEF: IRAN UNDECIDED ON NUCLEAR BOMB: *"In an exclusive VOA interview, the Pentagon's top intelligence official says there is no evidence that Iran has made a final decision to build nuclear weapons. But the chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) adds that much about Iran's inner workings remains murky."*

2. PARTS SENT TO IRAN COULD BE USED FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT: *"Three men, including an Iranian-born chemical engineer living in Glendale, have been charged in an alleged scheme to smuggle sophisticated industrial components into Iran that could be used in the development of a nuclear weapon, authorities said Wednesday."*

3. AGREEMENT REACHED ON INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS IN EUROPEAN UNION: *"The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in cooperation with the European Commission, has reached agreement on arrangements to implement "integrated safeguards" in all non-nuclear-weapon States of the European Union with significant nuclear activities."*

4. NNSA SCIENTISTS DEVELOP NEW CT SCANNER TO IMAGE NUCLEAR WEAPON COMPONENTS: *"The Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced today that it recently completed the installation and successful startup of a new surveillance diagnostic tool that is capable of detecting aging defects on critical components in the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile."*

5. FEDERAL PANEL WANTS MORE SCRUTINY OF BIOLAB WORKERS: *"A federal panel has recommended that researchers who work with the world's deadliest pathogens undergo more frequent security screening."*

6. [AF] NEWLY DECLASSIFIED DATA REVEALS INSURGENT USE OF WHITE PHOSPHORUS: *"Today, CJTF-101 has declassified a report of 38 events in which insurgents have used or stockpiled white phosphorus munitions in the Regional Command-East area of operations."*

Chem-Demil News

1. UMATILLA CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (UMCDF) – UMCDF PLANT MANAGER POSITION CHANGES HANDS: *"Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) Plant Manager Tim Morton has accepted the position of Transition Director under Mark Evans, president of the Washington Demilitarization Company of URS. Mike Noyes, Deputy Plant Manager at the Pine Bluff facility, has been promoted to Plant Manager at UMCDF."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

US DEFENSE SPY CHIEF: IRAN UNDECIDED ON NUCLEAR BOMB

By Gary Thomas
VOA News.com (Voice of America)
January 12, 2010

"In an exclusive VOA interview, the Pentagon's top intelligence official says there is no evidence that Iran has made a final decision to build nuclear weapons. But the chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) adds that much about Iran's inner workings remains murky.

Lieutenant General Ronald Burgess says the key finding that Iran has not yet committed itself to

nuclear weapons, contained in a controversial 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), is still valid.”

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“The 2007 NIE, a consensus judgment of all U.S. intelligence agencies, concluded that Iran halted nuclear weapons design work in 2003. The study sparked a fierce controversy with critics charging that the NIE was flawed and asserting that Iran is clearly on a path to become a nuclear power. Some recently published news reports quote unnamed sources as saying that many of U.S. President Barack Obama's advisors are skeptical of the intelligence estimate.

Iran has been pushing to enrich uranium, a critical step in building nuclear weapons, but continues to insist that it is for peaceful nuclear energy.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/US-Defense-Spy-Chief-Iran-Undecided-on-Nuclear-Bomb-81256887.html>

[Return to Top](#)

PARTS SENT TO IRAN COULD BE USED FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT

By Scott Glover

Los Angeles Times

January 14, 2010

“Three men, including an Iranian-born chemical engineer living in Glendale, have been charged in an alleged scheme to smuggle sophisticated industrial components into Iran that could be used in the development of a nuclear weapon, authorities said Wednesday.”

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“Authorities allege the men were attempting to smuggle high-grade vacuum pumps and other items into Iran in violation of federal trade laws regulating the export of some technology to unfriendly nations and U.S. sanctions against Iran. Investigators' suspicions were heightened by the great care the defendants took to hide their alleged activities.

"These were educated men," said Louis Rodi, a top supervisor in the Los Angeles customs office. "These individuals knew what they were doing."

According to an indictment filed in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, Jirair Avanesian, 56, of Glendale was paid several hundred thousand dollars to ship "high-dollar vacuum pumps and pump-related" equipment to Iran.

The parts, which were mislabeled and significantly devalued on shipping manifests, were initially sent to the United Arab Emirates, federal authorities said. A co-defendant would then forward the items to a third defendant in Tehran, according to court papers.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-iran-weapons14-2010jan14,0,6559423.story>

[Return to Top](#)

AGREEMENT REACHED ON INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS IN EUROPEAN UNION

International Atomic Energy Agency Press Release

January 08, 2010

“The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in cooperation with the European Commission, has reached agreement on arrangements to implement "integrated safeguards" in all non-nuclear-weapon

States of the European Union with significant nuclear activities.

"This important milestone is the result of the constructive common efforts of all parties concerned. It is a clear signal of the importance attributed by the EU and its Member States, as well as the IAEA, to the reinforcement of the nuclear non-proliferation regime," said Andris Piebalgs, Member of the European Commission in charge of Energy.

"Once we have sufficient confidence that a State's nuclear activities are purely peaceful, we can apply safeguards measures in a less prescriptive, more customised manner. This reduces the inspection burden on the State and the inspection effort of the IAEA, while enabling the IAEA to maintain the conclusion that all nuclear material has remained in peaceful activities," said Olli Heinonen, Deputy Director General and Head of IAEA Safeguards Department."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/PressReleases/2010/prn201001.html>
[Return to Top](#)

NNSA SCIENTISTS DEVELOP NEW CT SCANNER TO IMAGE NUCLEAR WEAPON COMPONENTS

US National Nuclear Security Administration News Release
January 13, 2010

"The Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced today that it recently completed the installation and successful startup of a new surveillance diagnostic tool that is capable of detecting aging defects on critical components in the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile.

In response to NNSA's need to implement cost effective, optimized inspection of nuclear components (also known as "surveillance transformation"), scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) teamed with NNSA's Pantex Plant near Amarillo, Texas, to develop a new X-ray computed tomography (CT) system to image nuclear weapon components. The new CT scan will enhance NNSA's surveillance program by providing a precise non-destructive means for the detection of aging phenomena on nuclear weapon components for evaluation of potential impact, and to provide a basis for assuring a high level of confidence in their continued performance.

"This new system is a prime example of NNSA's ability to leverage the best science and technology in the world to solve complex national security challenges and highlights our commitment to transforming a Cold War nuclear weapons complex into a 21st century nuclear security enterprise," said NNSA Administrator Thomas P. D'Agostino. "We are fortunate to have dedicated scientists working together from across the nuclear security enterprise to develop cutting-edge tools to monitor aging in critical weapon components."

This new, state-of-the-art nondestructive tool is similar in concept to CT scanners used by doctors and hospitals to get a view inside the human body without exploratory surgery.

Called CoLOSSIS (Confined Large Optical Scintillator Screen and Imaging System), this new high-resolution imaging system is used to scan weapons components to identify any anomalies that require additional attention. The system's software assembles the collected digital radiographs into a large three-dimensional image that scientists can analyze to discover any problems or anomalies.

After several years of designing and testing at LLNL, the CoLOSSIS installation and qualification was completed in September 2009 at Pantex. The project was managed and supported through NNSA's Enhanced Surveillance and Core Surveillance Programs.

This new capability will be used to detect structural variations arising from so-called "birth defects" or from the aging effects. One key feature of this state-of-the-art, nondestructive tool lies in the fact that it conserves valuable resources and assets by eliminating some destructive procedures and disassembly operations. Future inspections at Pantex will generate detailed, high fidelity surveillance data for scientists at LLNL and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). This tool and the associated data that it

generates represent a substantial improvement to NNSA's approach to conducting surveillance.

The first user of the CoLOSIS will be LANL in support of pit surveillance activities for the Air Force's B61 gravity bomb. Inspectors at LANL will assess these components for aging and manufacturing or other defects, and will be provided with never before seen three-dimensional characterizations of the components. Scientists will use the valuable data to develop surveillance assessments that could be used in future Life Extension Programs."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/2787.htm>

[Return to Top](#)

FEDERAL PANEL WANTS MORE SCRUTINY OF BIOLAB WORKERS

By David Dishneau

The Associated Press on SecurityInfoWatch.com

January 15, 2010

"A federal panel has recommended that researchers who work with the world's deadliest pathogens undergo more frequent security screening.

The Working Group on Strengthening the Biosecurity of the United States also suggested random drug tests and closer monitoring of the physical and mental health of those with access to dangerous pathogens.

And it recommended tighter scrutiny of foreign nationals who work in U.S. labs.

President George W. Bush's administration ordered the report after the FBI concluded an Army scientist was behind the 2001 anthrax attacks that killed five people. Its recommendations will be considered by lawmakers and federal regulators seeking to improve the safety of labs that handle dangerous germs and toxins.

The report was published Friday."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.securityinfowatch.com/Executives/1314420>

[Return to Top](#)

[AF] NEWLY DECLASSIFIED DATA REVEALS INSURGENT USE OF WHITE PHOSPHORUS

Combined Joint Task Force – 82 News Release

May 11, 2009

"Today, CJTF-101 has declassified a report of 38 events in which insurgents have used or stockpiled white phosphorus munitions in the Regional Command-East area of operations."

The declassification and release are in response to claims that insurgents do not use, nor have access to, white phosphorus.

The data, obtained from incident reporting from February 2003 through the present, show that insurgents have stockpiled and used white phosphorus against personnel in both indirect fire attacks as well as Improvised Explosive Devices.

ISAF and Coalition forces use white phosphorus in compliance with rules of engagement and international law.

White phosphorus is employed for obscuration, marking targets, illumination, as well as destruction of unoccupied bunkers, buildings and weapons systems, and the destruction of otherwise flammable

materials such as ammo and petroleum products.

It is used as a smoke-producing agent common to the arsenals of many nations, and is classified as conventional ordnance. It is not designed for use against personnel and is neither an incendiary weapon nor a chemical weapon.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cjtf101.com/press-releases-mainmenu-326/1680-newly-declassified-data-reveals-insurgent-use-of-white-phosphorus.html>

ANALYST NOTE: Although a bit dated, pertinent none the less.

[Return to Top](#)

Chem-Demil News

UMATILLA CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (UMCDF) – UMCDF PLANT MANAGER POSITION CHANGES HANDS

US Army Chemical Materials Agency Weekly Update
January 14, 2010

“Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) Plant Manager Tim Morton has accepted the position of Transition Director under Mark Evans, president of the Washington Demilitarization Company of URS. Mike Noyes, Deputy Plant Manager at the Pine Bluff facility, has been promoted to Plant Manager at UMCDF.

In announcing the changes, Evans said one of the keys to success in the coming years is the transition of work at the current incineration sites to work at the U.S. Army’s Assembled Chemical Weapons Agency (ACWA) sites and new work opportunities. Morton is expected to stay in the area but will be responsible for integrating the Total Workforce Planning effort focused on managing the transition of personnel from their responsibilities on the various current projects to their next career objectives.

Noyes has been at Pine Bluff since 2004 and worked at Anniston as Operations Manager prior to that, so he brings experience in processing of mustard-filled ton containers as well as a solid conduct of operations background to the project.

Morton served two stints as Plant Manager at UMCDF, the first one beginning in December 2004. After leaving in October 2007 for the corporate Project Integration Office in Abingdon, Md., he returned to UMCDF and resumed his post as Plant Manager in April 2009.

“I appreciate having the opportunity to serve as the Plant Manager and will continue to follow closely the project’s return to agent operations,” Morton said. “This team overcame many hurdles on its way to successful completion of the GB and VX campaigns. In the end, the HD campaign will also be a success.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003682209>
[Return to Top](#)

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