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MINUTES OF SIXTH MEETING OF
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT - ATOMIC WEAPONS TESTS
HELD AT 339 SWANSTON STREET, MELBOURNE, ON
FRIDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 1957

PRESENT

[Redacted]

Chairman
U.K.M.O.S.S.(A)
Department of Navy
Department of Air
U.K.S.L.S.
Department of Supply
Department of Defence
U.K.H.O.S.S.(A)
Secretary to Board

ABSENT

[Redacted]

U.K.M.O.S.S.(A)
Department of Supply
Department of Army

IN ATTENDANCE

[Redacted]

A.W.R.E.
A.W.R.E.
A.W.R.E.
Department of Supply
Department of Army
U.K.H.O.S.S.(A)
Department of Army

The meeting opened at 3 p.m.

Apologies were received from [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted].

The Chairman welcomed [Redacted] and [Redacted] and congratulated them on the successful conclusion of the Antler series.

Item 4: Confirmation of Minutes

Subject to the following amendments the minutes of the Fifth Meeting held on 26th August, 1957 were confirmed:-

Page 2 Item 7 - Operation Antler - Participation of Australian Health Physics Team

- (a) Delete "as the Department of Health, through the Director, C.X.R.L. is responsible for health physics at Maralinga during inter-trials periods."
- (b) After the words "to the Committee for advice" add the following paragraphs:-

[Redacted]

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"In order to implement the agreement on health physics responsibilities during inter-trials periods at Maralinga the Board of Management and Atomic Weapons Tests Safety Committee have agreed that C.X.R.L. will supervise on behalf of A.W.R.E. the activities of the Health Physics Representative. The Health Physics Representative has direct scientific responsibility to A.W.R.E. to whom he will report through the Range Commander, sending copies to the Board of Management, C.X.R.L. and the Atomic Weapons Tests Safety Committee. C.X.R.L. will be administratively responsible for the Health Physics Representative.

The duties of the Health Physics Representative are laid down in general terms in the Radiological Safety Regulations, Maralinga, but in addition he will carry out as requested certain specific items of investigational work for A.W.R.E.

A.W.R.E. and C.X.R.L. are agreed that the immediate programme of work demands that the Health Physics Representative should be assisted by 4 members of the R.D.U. in addition to the assistant Health Physics Representative supplied by the U.K.

As a consequence of atomic weapons trials both at Maralinga and at Christmas Island the R.A.F. need to carry out servicing of radioactively contaminated aircraft at R.A.A.F. Edinburgh Field. The responsibility for the health physics aspects of this work lies with the Air Ministry, implementing procedures so far as health physics control is concerned to standards approved by A.W.R.E.

A.W.R.E. requires the Maralinga Health Physics Representative to visit Edinburgh Field periodically to check that the standards of such control do not fall below those laid down in the Radiological Safety Regulations, Maralinga, or subsequent R.A.F. institution agreed by A.W.R.E. He will report his findings directly to A.W.R.E., but he will have no executive authority."

Item 45 Operation Antler - Review by Trials Director

gave an interesting and informative review of the Antler series, the main points of which are summarised as under:-

- (a) The information obtained from the trials had added appreciably to the existing accumulation of essential scientific knowledge.
- (b) The use of balloons in the third test was completely successful and vindicated predictions that fallout would be negligible from such a burst.
- (c) Individual reports on the numerous activities comprising the series will be published in due course and distributed through normal channels.

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- (d) The Maralinga Range Support Unit had done a really good job. Special tribute was paid to [REDACTED] as Range Commander.

At the conclusion of the review by the Trials Director, the Chairman said he wished to be associated with the tribute paid to the Range Commander, and on behalf of the Board, thanked [REDACTED] for his excellent work in command of the Maralinga Range Support Unit.

[REDACTED] asked that the Board take note of the valuable contributions made by the Security Branch, Department of Supply, during both the planning and operational phases of the Antler series of tests. Security measures at the Range had been organised in a manner which evoked the healthy cooperation of all scientific and administrative staff. The many problems concerning safe hand, communications, personnel, safety considerations and security of information both at Maralinga and elsewhere had consistently been solved in a highly creditable way. The Security Branch, because of its resources in Victoria and New South Wales, had also met efficiently certain contingent emergencies not of prime security emphasis, and this form of cooperation was of considerable help to the administrative staff.

Action
Complete

Decision - As above.

Item 46 Sixth Progress Report - Maralinga Range Support Unit

The Range Commander's report was tabled at the meeting and a copy is attached to these minutes.

Following some discussion on the water supply position it was agreed that [REDACTED], Defence Standards Laboratories, should continue to keep in touch with [REDACTED] on this matter.

Action
Complete

Decision - Progress noted.

Item 47 Maralinga - Requirement for Blood Counts during inter-trials periods

[REDACTED] proposed that any person going to Maralinga for a period of a week or longer should have a blood count before arriving on site. The purpose was two-fold:-

- (a) To disqualify from visiting the range any person whose blood counts showed abnormalities.
- (b) In the event of a claim alleging illness or other damage due to radiation effects being lodged by a person who may have visited or worked at Maralinga for a week or longer, a record would be available upon which the Australian or U.K. Government may base a case.

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After discussion the Board felt that the proposal should be referred to the Safety Committee for comment.

(Note - Subsequent to the meeting [redacted] spoke to [redacted] and agreed to have further talks with the A.W.R.E. authorities upon his return to the U.K. He will report progress to both the Board and [redacted]).

Action Secretary

Decision As above.

Item 48 Maralinga - Future Trials Programme - Current Position



Members were informed that the Australian Government has been notified by the U.K. Government that it is unlikely that a further series of major trials will be held at Maralinga during 1953. A firm decision is expected to be taken at the end of November. If no major tests are held at Maralinga next year the U.K. hope to resume kiloton trials at the Range in subsequent years.

It is understood, however, that irrespective of the decision taken at the end of November, minor trials will continue to be conducted during 1953

Action Secretary

Decision As above.

Item 49 Maintenance and Works Programmes subsequent to Operation Antler

[redacted] informed the Board that he is preparing proposals covering a restricted works programme and the general maintenance requirements of the area for early submission to the U.K. These proposals are based on the assumption that no major trials will be held at Maralinga during 1953.

Action [redacted]

Decision Noted.

Item 50 Maralinga - Preliminary estimates of personnel required during 1953 to man the Range on a standby basis

A lengthy discussion ensued on this item and may be summarised as under:-

(a) [redacted] is preparing for early submission to the U.K. an estimated manning schedule which, on present thinking, will be of the order of:-

The other requirements was about 200 - this includes 100 manning

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Australian Servicemen | 100 |
| U.K. " | 144 |
| Australian Civilian Agencies | 38 |
| Australian Civilian employees | 12 |

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- (b) It is essential that the estimated manning schedule together with the works and maintenance programmes be forwarded to the Australian Government for early consideration of the Australian contribution to the basic force.
- (c) The Stores and Transport Branch of the Department of Supply could undertake, on a long term basis, the repair and maintenance of the Maralinga transport fleet should skilled Service personnel not be available to undertake the task.

Action



Decision Await U.K. advice.

The meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING. At the call of the Chairman.



Secretary
Board of Management - Atomic Weapons Tests.

Approved



CHAIRMAN.

