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**From:** Paul Hale <phale@3-cities.com>  
**To:** R10SEA1.R0HAN(GADBOIS-LARRY)  
**Date:** 6/6/99 4:15pm  
**Subject:** Hanford K Basins Project Comment

Dear Sir:

As a concerned member of the Tri-Cities geographical area, please take note of this comment.

I was employed at a DOE site (outside of Washington) for approximately 10 years. My primary role was in the field of Quality Assurance. We saw the degradation of the Quality Program over the years to the point that we firmly believed DOE had put the "K" in "Kwality". In other words, the Quality Assurance program was watered down to the point that it was no longer as asset. You see, QA is a management tool and it is only as good/useful if management really endorses it. When management no longer believes in quality, one may as well spell it with a "K".

Recently there was an article in the Tri-City Herald that stated that welds were found unacceptable; that DOE was trying to determine what went wrong. What assurance does DOE give to the public that any welding, or any other "special process", will receive the needed attention to detail? How much money is DOE willing to spend, or forfeit, to assure true Quality Control?

Let's step back fifteen years.

Back then, the quality program employed by DOE was based on NQA-1 - a much more stringent set of regulations than the DOE Order 5700.6C used as the basis for their QA programs starting around 1993. When the rules were strict, all went reasonably well. When the QA program lost control (1993), due to being based on "self-assessments" (DOE Order 5700.6C), the public was put at a higher risk. Being part of the public, I resent DOE's lackadaisical (sp?) attitude toward public risk.

What QA Program will be used for the K Basins project? How much risk is acceptable to DOE?

Thanks in advance.

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