

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

**SUBJECT:** Switching from secondary to primary bypass during fish sample collection

**Narrative:** Last night we learned at 5 PM that our graveyard relief shift Biological Technician would not be able to work his normal shift due to a serious family crisis that required his presence. Normally we would be able to call in a second technician or biologist to fill in for him, but we were unable to do so last night, as no one was available, due to scheduling issues, position vacancies, and illnesses.

Separator duty requires technical expertise and extensive training. Assigning an inexperienced person to work the separator at night as could lead to the loss of a considerable number of fish in a very short period of time.

As the sample had already been compromised by having to go into primary bypass due to an earlier incident yesterday, it was felt that another disruption was less critical than normal during this sampling period. I discussed the situation with supervisory personnel and received support for my decision to go into primary bypass at the end of the swing shift. Although no fish were harmed or lost, the sample period was shorted to an 8-10 hour period instead of the usual 24 hour period.

In short, we just did not have the staff to cover this shift. There are consequences when a staff member leaves, and we do not yet have new staff to take their place, even though we started immediately to fill in the vacant staff position. We have been able to stretch our staff to the limit over the past few weeks in order to cover for the missing staff member up until now, but the vacancy finally caught up with us. We expect to fill this vacancy in another month or so.

We will cross train additional Corps personnel from outside the fish facility to temporarily remedy this staff shortage and avoid a repeat of these circumstances.

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