

1909

1909

"DOD officials stated that no known special precautions were taken to preclude ground personnel's exposure to herbicide spraying. They added that exposure was very unlikely since DOD personnel did not enter a sprayed area until approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the mission when defoliation was complete and the herbicide had biodegraded or photodegraded."

The restriction was for operational reasons, not health. Army chemical officers confirmed that no restrictions were placed on entering sprayed areas.

Trop were kept out of areas to be sprayed and commanders were notified 48 hours before missions. This was to prevent danger to US forces from the fighters who accompanied the RANCH HAND missions, not to avoid herbicide exposure, according to RH personnel and chemical officers.

*"Dept of Def Response to Questions,
G.A.O. Letter of July 2, 1979,
"Health Effects of Exposure to Herbicides -
Orange and Blue" p. 2, reprinted
in Appendix III p. 5.*

Author Comp. Gen.
Code # 1909
Page (s) 4-5

Defoliant - an agent which will cause the leaves to separate and fall from the vegetation to which it has been applied. Although repeated defoliation by insects or natural causes will ultimately cause the death of vegetation, most species appear capable of recovery unless there is a physiological decline already existant in individual deciduous species which are approaching death.

Desiccant - an agent which essentially dries up the plant foliage. This does not invariably lead to leaf drop...it may even delay drop...and thus it may or may not increase observationally visibility.

Vegetation Control Agents - those agents when applied to vegetation which will ultimately lead to the death of all or a selected portion of that vegetation. May be indiscriminate or selective kill type chemicals

*J W Brown, Feb 62
"Vegetation Spray International"*

Author _____

Code # 1408 _____

129-30