



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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SPECIAL ASSISTANT
TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR GULF WAR ILLNESSES,
MEDICAL READINESS, AND
MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS

December 5, 2000

Dear

As the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness, and Military Deployments, I am responsible for evaluating potential health impacts of your service during the Gulf War. I am committed to investigating and providing you with the most up-to-date and scientifically valid information available regarding the demolition of chemical agent munitions at Khamisiyah, Iraq on March 10, 1991. In 1997, my office announced that some Gulf War veterans may have been exposed to a very low level of chemical agent resulting from this demolition. You did not receive a letter then because our analysis showed that your unit was not in the potential exposure area. Since that announcement, more information has become available, and we have worked hard to improve our knowledge of the potential exposure areas and unit locations. As a result of these ongoing investigations, I am contacting Gulf War veterans, like you, whose units were near Khamisiyah March 10-13, 1991.

Using state of the art computer modeling technology and more accurate unit location data, we have improved our analysis of potential exposures to individuals whose units were near Khamisiyah during the demolition of Iraqi weapons. The models now predict that if you were with your unit at the time of the demolition at Khamisiyah, you may, indeed, have been exposed to very low levels of chemical agent for a brief period of time (less than 3 days) after the demolition. It is important for you to know, based on current medical evidence and ongoing research, there is no indication that any long-term health effects would be expected from a brief, low-level exposure to chemical agents that may have occurred near Khamisiyah.

I have enclosed a fact sheet that outlines our analysis, as well as answers to some frequently asked questions. **If you have additional questions about any of the information that I have provided to you, please call my office at 1-800-497-6261 or visit our website at www.gulflink.osd.mil.** Your local library may be able to assist you in getting information from our website. If you have specific health concerns, I encourage you to seek medical assistance from the programs established for Gulf War veterans. The Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) both offer comprehensive medical programs for Gulf War veterans. To schedule an appointment with the DoD program, call 1-800-796-9699; to schedule an appointment with the VA's program, call 1-800-749-8387.

We have a national obligation to protect the health of our veterans. I am committed to ensuring that you have the best information and healthcare we can offer.

Sincerely,

Bernard Rostker

*Enclosure