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U.S. Declines to Give Details on Radiation

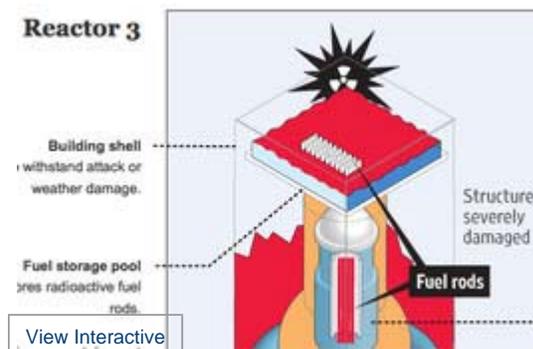
By [STEPHEN POWER](#) and [CAROL E. LEE](#)

WASHINGTON—U.S. government officials, in private sessions on Capitol Hill Friday, repeatedly declined to give details of radiation measurements at the stricken Japanese nuclear complex, saying the situation is shrouded in a "fog of war."

Separately, the Obama administration said Friday "miniscule quantities" of radiation from the Japanese nuclear accident were detected Friday at a monitoring station in Sacramento, Calif., a day after similar traces of radiation were detected in Washington state. The administration said the levels of the radioactive isotope xenon 133 were approximately equivalent to one-millionth the dose received from the sun, rocks or other natural sources.

The Obama administration's reluctance to detail in public what it is learning from radiation-detection operations around the damaged Fukushima Daiichi complex in Japan highlights a broader sensitivity in the U.S.'s posture toward a stricken ally. The shift comes after statements Wednesday by the head of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission that painted a grimmer picture of the nuclear crisis than Japanese officials had offered, and suggested that the U.S. didn't trust the information coming from the Japanese government.

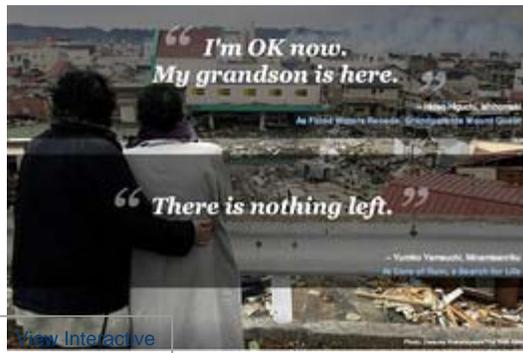
Reactor Monitor



Survivors' Stories

NRC officials told congressional staffers in a briefing Friday that their information about radiation levels around the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex is fluid, and declined repeatedly to release detailed data, saying the information they have isn't reliable enough to share.

The head of the NRC, Gregory Jaczko, on Wednesday said the radiation risks from the badly damaged [Tokyo Electric Power Co.](#) complex called for evacuating U.S. citizens living within 50 miles of the facility—a



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Friday said they don't expect harmful levels of radiation to reach U.S. shores, multiple participants in the meeting said. The officials didn't describe in detail how far radiation from the plant has reached.

"Most of the radiation that's been released is gaseous, which goes right up," one aide said. "So radiation levels at ground level will be different from radiation levels above the reactor."

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization said Friday that its network of radiation sensors had detected radiation emitting from a series of accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant last Saturday and had followed the radiation plume across thousands of miles of ocean to Sacramento.

The radiation could circle the globe in roughly two weeks, said Annika Thunborg, a spokeswoman for the United Nations's agency.

recommendation that jolted Japanese officials who had said that only people living within 12 miles of the plant should leave.

Mr. Jaczko's spokesman said Thursday said the NRC's information about the conditions at the plant was inconclusive, but the agency erred on the side of caution.

At one point, officials who briefed congressional staffers Friday said they had earlier in the week detected radiation levels above reactor No. 4 in the Fukushima complex spiking to 300 millisieverts, people familiar with the meeting said.

That figure is consistent with statements from the Japanese government earlier this week that it had measured a radiation doses of between 30 and 400 millisieverts.

International standards for acceptable radiation exposure are 20 millisieverts year, 50 millisieverts per year by U.S. standards, said Arjun Makhijani, of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research.

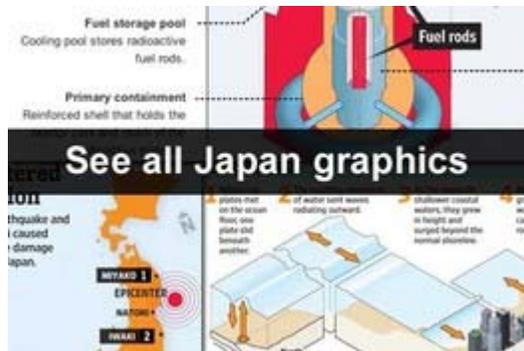
The U.S. NRC limits the exposure of U.S. nuclear workers to no more than 50 millisieverts per year.

NRC officials who briefed congressional aides

President Barack Obama said Thursday that U.S. nuclear experts don't expect harmful levels of radiation to reach the U.S. from Japan, but the administration has deployed additional radiation sensors along the West Coast and in Hawaii, Guam and the Alaska.

Obama administration officials have expressed frustration with the quality and timeliness of information from Japan, and with the Japanese government's apparent reluctance to ask for more help in coping with the disaster. But the Japanese signaled a new openness on Friday to receiving help, U.S. officials said.

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The Japanese government has sent requests to the U.S. for additional resources, including protective materials such as suits, rubber gloves and boots, a U.S. official said.

"They are engaging their allies to assist them more," the official said.

Japan's willingness to accept more assistance comes after a week of a tactful diplomatic back-and-forth between two close allies, and is still not at the level Obama administration officials say is merited by the gravity of the crisis.

"It is very delicate," an administration official said.

Japan's Ambassador to the U.S., Ichiro Fujisaki, said during an appearance in Washington Friday that his country is "trying to cope" with the continuing nuclear crisis and that efforts to address humanitarian needs and other challenges in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami is "not an easy situation."

—David Crawford in Berlin and Ryan Tracy in Washington contributed to this article.

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