U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Orders Shaw Group to Protect Whistleblowers After KMB Client James Speegle Wins Whistleblower Ruling

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In an important victory for nuclear whistleblowers, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (“NRC”) has ordered the Shaw Group, a Fortune 500 corporation with over 28,000 employees, to institute sweeping improvements in how it responds to workers’ safety complaints throughout its U.S. nuclear operations. The NRC’s order follows a U.S. Department of Labor (“DOL”) ruling that a Shaw Group company broke federal law when it fired James Speegle, a painter foreman at the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant near Florence, Alabama, in May 2004. Speegle is represented by KMB attorneys David J. Marshall, Debra S. Katz and Matthew S. Stiff.

On September 24, 2009, a DOL appeals panel found that Stone & Webster Construction, Inc., a Shaw Group subsidiary, violated Speegle’s rights under federal whistleblower-protection law by terminating him at Browns Ferry. In September 2010, Speegle’s successful suit prompted the NRC to take action against the Shaw Group under the commission’s power to enforce whistleblower-protection regulations at U.S. nuclear plants. The resulting NRC order requires the Shaw Group to take numerous safety improvement actions across its entire U.S. nuclear operations, and threatens the company with civil and criminal penalties if it fails to implement these measures.

Read the NRC’s order directing the Shaw Group to institute changes: Nuclear Regulatory Commission Order Against The Shaw Group.