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Rowstock 377 Ext: 7

17th January, 1961.

W. J. Kane, Esq.,
Silica Gel Ltd.,
Astoria House,
62 Shaftesbury Avenue,
London, W.1.

Dear Mr. Kane,

Contract CON/HAR/2B/54024
Hydrogen Gas Drier Unit and ancillary vessels,
valves, and pipework in composite panel

As a result of your Company's tender against our enquiry of the above reference, the U.K.A.E.A. placed an order with you on our behalf for Gas Drying Plant on the 17th March 1960. On the basis of your tender delivery of this item was expected about 30th September 1960.

About the middle of May, discussions took place between your Mr. Hurst and Messrs. Farmer, Ashburn and Colyer of the National Institute. The object of these discussions was to make certain additions, and incorporate the whole equipment in a composite panel. You quoted for this additional work on 25th May 1960, and we telephoned instructions to proceed on 24th June 1960. This instruction was confirmed contractually on 4th July 1960.

Since that date both my Technical and Contractual staff have made repeated attempts to obtain a firm delivery promise. Further, every assistance has been given by us in respect of obtaining the materials you required. Although it is appreciated that some difficulty was experienced in obtaining the various high pressure vessels required, my colleagues feel that much other preparatory work could have been completed and that a much firmer delivery promise than the vague, subsequently altered, information given to them should have been possible.

This equipment is now the only holding item of the plant required for a major Hydrogen Bubble Chamber project on which we are engaged. Its absence is preventing my main piping and installation contractor from completing his work to programme. The programme is interlinked with the intended transfer of the complete plant to Switzerland later this year, for important physics experiments in conjunction with the C.E.R.N. 25 GeV Proton Accelerator. This exercise affects the programmes of work of CERN, which is an international organisation of 14 nations, and several British universities. Thus we are faced not only with serious delays in our own work but also with damage to national prestige and the good relations which the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science at present enjoys with our universities.

I am informed that you are now in possession of all the materials required to complete the work you have undertaken. Would you please, therefore, do your utmost to ensure that the equipment covered by this contract is delivered to us not later than 14th February 1961. Should you be able to improve on this delivery date it will assist us in recovering the position at least in part.

Yours sincerely,

T. G. Pickavance
Director

c.c. Mr. L. B. Mullett
Mr. G. J. Farmer
Dr. W. Evans
Mr. M. Snowden