

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 14, 2003

TO: K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. Grover and M. Sautman, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending February 14, 2003

Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): PFP has completed stabilizing their current inventory of polycubes and packaging the resulting plutonium (Pu) oxide into DOE-STD-3013 cans. About two polycubes, which were used for process development purposes, are to be transferred from a Battelle laboratory to PFP next week for disposition. This eliminates one of the least desirable forms of Pu that had been at Hanford. The Site Rep observed mockup testing of the washing process to be used to remove chlorides from Pu oxides. The Site Rep reviewed the process history and characterization data for several hundred kilograms of mixed oxides containing 10-30% Pu that PFP wants to reclassify as residues. The Site Rep believes that operator training and procedures are adequate to prevent any inappropriate material from being repackaged as transuranic waste. An inspection of the nonconforming D-8 tank found that the agitator worked and that the tank was dry. This will likely allow the Pu assay estimates to be reduced. (III-A)

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The Phase I/II Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS) Verification for the WTP concluded that the project Lessons Learned (LL) database is marginal, implementation of an effective LL program is not complete, and that not all safety commitments were being consistently tracked in a proceduralized issues tracking system. Other findings addressed a non-conformance report that was dispositioned use-as-is without sufficient justification, inadequate knowledge of the field change notice process by design and field engineers, and quality assurance (e.g., roles and responsibilities, feedback process). Comments were generally favorable for work at the construction site. In light of the findings from an Office of River Protection (ORP) inspection of the Authorization Basis (AB) Management process, ORP has concluded that proposed reductions in the AB change controls are not warranted at this time. ORP's position is that Bechtel must first demonstrate a consistent ability to perform to the existing change control requirements prior to further reductions being considered. (I-C)

Training: The Site Rep informed Fluor Hanford (FH) and the Department of Energy (DOE) of many problems with the conduct of an 8 hour HAZWOPER Refresher course that have implications for safety management programs (i.e., training) and quality assurance. In response, FH and the DOE Grant Manager have requested that the parent organization provide an alternate instructor and they will be discussing additional corrective actions next week, including the possibility of cancelling classes by this grantee until the issues have been resolved. (I-B)

Tank Farms: CH2M Hill Hanford Group completed their first institutionalized Recommendation 2000-2 Phase II Assessment which examined the SY farm ventilation system. ORP approved a graded approach Operational Readiness Review for the C-106 waste retrieval technologies, which is the level that the Site Rep had been advocating. The Site Rep observed workers on graveyard shift make a sixth unsuccessful attempt to remove the C-106 heel jet pump using a crane, wedges, a vibration tool, and a hydraulic jack. (I-C, III-B)

cc: Board Members