

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 21, 2003

TO: K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. Grover and M. Sautman, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending February 21, 2003

Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): In an attempt to dissolve any Pu or U solids in Tank D-8, PFP added KMnO_4 , 4 M HNO_3 , ferric nitrate, and water and is agitating the tank. The investigation of the criticality nonconformance led to the identification of a Potential Inadequacy of the Safety Analysis because the safety analysis did not reflect the revised criticality evaluation. It was also identified that 3 procedures still contained the old criticality mass limit although this limit was changed about 2 years ago and these are step-by-step procedures. Finally, it was determined that the Pu inventory value for the downstream Tank D-5 was not performed according to procedure. The Site Rep questioned what PFP was doing to determine how extensive these configuration management issues were. PFP is planning to perform a management assessment to investigate this concern and is dealing with an individual responsible for several of the issues. (I-C, III-A)

Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): Following the January maintenance outage, SNFP has suffered an increase in equipment problems that have resulted in limited fuel shipments from both K-East and K-West basins. Problems with the Multi-Canister Overpack (MCO) basket loading system have halted MCO shipments while at K-East improperly installed brakes in the Fuel Transfer System (FTS) Annex crane have prevented FTS shipments. The project has been able to continue preparing fuel for shipment from K-West and has finished baskets for the next 3 MCOs. These equipment problems are hindering short-term production goals. Unless these problems continue to the extent previously experienced by the project, the on-time completion of fuel removal should not be at risk. This is due to the increased production effort to meet the recent interim milestone for fuel removal which recovered several months of schedule. (III-A)

T Plant: Fluor Hanford completed an independent assessment of the facility's readiness to resume operations following the safety stand-down imposed on January 20, 2003. On February 18, medium and high risk work was allowed to restart, including construction work needed to support receipt of sludge from the K-East Basin. (III-A)

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The Site Rep inspected recent Pretreatment Facility placements where revibration was performed. There were a few cracks, but they appeared to be minor hairline cracks that did not penetrate the concrete and were not associated with the rebar. (I-C)

Training: In light of the training issues discussed in last week's report, Fluor Hanford (FH) informed the Site Rep that the grantee who conducted the class in question would no longer be teaching the 8 Hour HAZWOPER Refresher course. What is disappointing is that FH did not fix these problems a few months ago when CH2M Hill Hanford Group (CHG) stopped allowing their staff to receive training from this grantee due to concerns CHG had with the quality. CHG is also pursuing the Site Rep's suggestion to have the instructors who will teach the tank farms-specific HAZWOPER course visit tank farms to increase their familiarity with the farms. (I-B)
cc: Board Members