

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 30, 2009

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending January 30, 2009

Staff members B. Heshmatpour and S. Lewis and outside expert B. Yeniscavich were on-site to observe the first workshop on single-shell tank integrity.

Tank Farms: The contractor completed the root cause analyses for two Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) violations, both of which are related to Commercial Grade Item Dedication (CGID) of safety-significant (SS) components (see Activity Reports 11/21/08 and 11/28/08). The contractor determined that the root cause for the failure to qualify the SS Monitoring and Control System was an inadequate graded quality assurance process. The failure occurred when the scope of the system was modified in 2006 but CGID was not performed for equipment previously classified as general service. The contractor determined that the root cause for failure to qualify the SS waste isolation valves was the inappropriate interpretation of performance criteria specified in the Documented Safety Analysis (DSA). The DSA used the term “or equivalent” but did not further define what equivalent meant.

K Basins Closure Project: The contractor is nearing the completion of the management self-assessment for starting the sampling of containerized sludge from the basin floors and pits. The design of the equipment used to draw the samples is the same as that used in previous sampling evolutions and relies on a vacuum to draw the sludge into cascaded one-liter bottles. The contractor is expecting to start sampling next week, depending on the results of the assessment. The sampling is being conducted to better characterize the sludge to facilitate design of the retrieval, packaging, and treatment systems.

Plutonium Finishing Plant: The site reps and contractor management discussed the recovery plan created to address a condition of approval from the Justification of Continued Operation related to performance of older HEPA filters (see Activity Report 11/28/09). The recovery plan did not address the technical basis for accepting HEPA filters greater than 10 years old but indicated that a separate report is being prepared and will be completed in April 2009. Contractor management stated that they are ready to modify the ventilation system to isolate the filters greater than 20 years old and the work will start when changes are completed to the associated TSR administrative controls. The replacement of the 17-year-old filters has started and will be completed in March 2009. The Richland Operations Office (RL) is reviewing the plan.

DOE directed the contractor to send the off-normal 3013 container off-site (see Activity Report 8/1/08). The container will be handled under the existing Material Identification and Surveillance Program.

Environmental Management (EM) Technical Authority: Site Technical Authorities (STAs) have been identified for the two EM site offices. J. Wicks is the STA for the Office of River Protection and B. Hill is the STA for RL.