

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 1, 2006

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: R. Todd Davis/Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending December 1, 2006

A. Site-Wide Fire Protection. As reported on November 10th, limited funding impacted progress on the BWXT 10-year comprehensive fire protection corrective action plan. This week, YSO formally requested that BWXT revise and resubmit the plan by early February. YSO asked that current plans for the remaining life of nuclear facilities be considered and that criteria from the Building 9212 Facility Risk Review (see the 11/17/06 site rep. report) be used in the reevaluation and prioritization of fire protection corrective actions. YSO also requested that the technical basis for modified or deleted actions be provided.

B. Wet Chemistry - Secondary Extraction. In December 2005, secondary extraction operations were suspended due to an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) associated with the unexpected presence of concentrated organics in the system. A Justification for Continued Operations (JCO) was approved by YSO to conduct the operation with additional administrative controls. YSO also asked for a BWXT plan to identify an engineered remedy to the USQ. Last week, YSO approved BWXT's plan that includes various physical modifications to the system and a change in the organic diluent. Some secondary extraction operations with the JCO controls have been conducted; however, limited data has been collected to evaluate the long-term safety controls.

C. Y-12 Nuclear Criticality Safety Committee. This week, the Y-12 Nuclear Criticality Safety Committee began their annual review of the Y-12 criticality program. This year, the committee will be focusing on criticality safety at the Assembly/Disassembly Building. In addition, the review will include some site-level criticality safety issues (e.g., container simplification) and evaluation of prior corrective actions including those for the vacuum pump filter issue (see the 7/28/06 site rep. report). The team plans to complete their field work in January.

D. Startup Notification Report. The site reps. have noted two recent instances where startup of certain operations was not addressed in the BWXT Startup Notification Report (SNR) that is periodically submitted to YSO per DOE Order 425.1, *Startup and Restart of Nuclear Facilities*. One instance was a Warehouse glovebag operation to inspect uranium metal items in legacy containers in which a small fire occurred after opening one of the containers (see the 10/6/06 site rep. report). This campaign had not been identified in the SNR prior to startup; an SNR submission identifying this campaign was submitted after startup. The other instance involved lack of SNR coverage for a broad scope materials to undergo the beaker leaching operation. The SNR covered a specific campaign of special machining chips, but not the broader scope of materials addressed in the beaker leaching operating procedure (see 10/27/06 site rep. report).

The site reps. inquired with YSO and BWXT on any actions being taken to ensure proper, timely SNR coverage of the full scope of operations being started/restarted. YSO and BWXT personnel noted to the site reps. that the BWXT procedure governing readiness level determinations and development of the SNR is being revised. The revision and associated training of personnel is intended to more clearly call for the detailed scope of an operation to be defined and to ensure an SNR submission is made prior to startup/restart.