

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 6, 2004

**TO:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representative  
**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending February 6, 2004

A. Recommendation 2000-1 at ORNL. The DOE Implementation Plan for Recommendation 2000-1, *Prioritization for Stabilizing Nuclear Materials*, states that ORNL plutonium (Pu) is to be repackaged or disposed by May 2003. As reported on October 10<sup>th</sup>, completion of the ORNL commitment had been delayed and was not expected until mid-2004. The ORNL plutonium addressed under Recommendation 2000-1 consists of about 700 grams of Pu-239 and about 600 grams of Pu-238. Most of the Pu-239 had been either shipped to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to be packaged for long-term storage or re-designated for programmatic use at ORNL. For the Pu-238, the 2000-1 Implementation Plan states that ORNL would be shipping the material to Los Alamos National Laboratory. DOE Headquarters still has not made formal notification to the Board on these delays or on a new schedule for completion of the ORNL commitment.

The site rep. was informed this week, however, that the DOE Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology and DOE-ORO had taken formal action in December to re-designate all of the Pu-238 for programmatic use at ORNL. The intended use is to blend this material with Pu-238 produced during the ORNL Pu-238 production program (from irradiated Neptunium-237), planned several years in the future. The site rep. discussed this change for Pu-238 as outlined in the 2000-1 Implementation Plan with senior DOE-ORO management and urged that the Board be formally notified of the change. (III)

B. Y-12 Building 9212 Oxide Conversion Facility (OCF). As reported on October 31<sup>st</sup>, “cold operations” to prepare for OCF start-up were expected to begin in February and Operational Readiness Reviews were to begin by May. These schedule milestones are in question due to pending changes to the Building 9212 Basis for Interim Operation, lack of expected progress in operating procedure development and equipment change and maintenance issues. YSO and BWXT efforts to respond to the Board staff observations forwarded by the Board’s letter of December 31, 2003 on OCF are in progress. YSO intends to send a written response to NNSA Headquarters. (II)

C. Y-12 Authorization Basis (AB) Implementation - Independent Validation. As reported on January 16<sup>th</sup>, YSO and BWXT had not yet developed their procedures/manuals for conducting independent validation of implementation of AB controls developed under 10 CFR 830 (an action briefed to the Board during their July 2003 Y-12 visit). An interim “Standing Order” had been issued calling for BWXT reviews, but with little guidance. This week, YSO and BWXT management informed the site rep. that expanded BWXT guidance and new YSO protocols will be developed by early March, and that the BWXT guidance will be generally based on guidance developed several years ago at Rocky Flats. Implementation reviews in other Y-12 nuclear facilities will be performed following development of the BWXT guidance and YSO protocols. Lessons-learned from earlier implementation validation review findings on Buildings 9720-18 and 9720-38 (Hazard Category 3 nuclear storage facilities) are to be incorporated into line management implementation efforts. (I)

D. Public Interaction. The site rep. made a presentation on complex-wide Board activities to the Knoxville, Tennessee chapter of the American Nuclear Society.

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Board Members