

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 30, 2001

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Paul F. Gubanc and David T. Moyle, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending March 30, 2001

Staff member Winters was in Oak Ridge this week to attend a design review for the Foster-Wheeler TRU waste processing facility. Mr. Moyle was on leave Thursday and Friday.

A. Y-12 Enriched Uranium Operations (EUO) Restart: This week, NNSA conducted its operational readiness review (ORR) for reduction and pour-up operations. The ORR team conducted a capable review and identified six pre- and three post-start findings and six observations. The team lauded EUO operations and management personnel for their performance during the ORR. Most of the findings involved support activities associated with the adequacy of surveillances, calibrations and inspections. The final version of the NNSA ORR report is expected to be issued next week.

Several performance issues are worth highlighting. The inspection performed on the reaction vessel was signed off as adequate even though the inspector could not identify the acceptance criteria. Also, while conducting the furnace surveillance the inspector did not utilize the required procedure, did not perform all the required inspections, and did not record the results when required. More disturbing, however, is that the inspector's management, when presented with these findings, defended the actions of the inspector and the inspection results themselves as adequate. This is not the first time the performance of safety equipment inspections have been problematic.

- The LMES August 2000 ISM Independent Assessment identified the Y-12 inspection group as having significant organizational, procedural and performance issues.
- The failed DOE Readiness Assessment of Reduction in November 1999, identified inadequate performance of the reduction furnace surveillance as a major finding.
- A Board letter dated October 8, 1998, identified concerns with the adequacy of inspections performed on the EUO Holden Gas Furnace.

BWXT senior management is taking action with the inspection group. We will be discussing with YAO what constitutes adequate corrective action to support the restart of reduction. (2-A)

B. Y-12 Standards/Requirements Identification Document (S/RID): On March 15, the Board issued a letter to DOE/NNSA expressing concern that the Y-12 S/RID did not include the DOE Order 4330.4B requirement for periodic inspections of safety-related equipment. On March 22, BWXT submitted a proposed change to bring the maintenance S/RID into compliance with the order. YAO approved the change March 30. BWXT's plans to implement this change are yet to be determined (the Y-12 facility condition assessment program was halted several years ago due to lack of funds). Given the recent issues with Y-12 S/RIDs (e.g., missing training requirements as per our February 9 weekly letter), YAO is evaluating whether a review of all the Y-12 S/RIDs is merited. (1-C)

C. ORNL Building 3019B: On March 29, the staff again met via videoconference with DOE-ORO and Bechtel-Jacobs to discuss their path forward to better characterize potential shock-sensitive explosive and criticality hazards in the ventilation ductwork of Building 3019B. DOE announced the assignment of a new project manager and its approval of funding and a plan-of-action to conduct non-intrusive surveys and prepare for sampling within the next several months. The urgency and attention 3019B is receiving is a refreshing break from the lethargy of the past several years. (3-B)

cc: Board Members