

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 15, 2001

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Charles M. Coones, Oak Ridge Site Representative
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending June 15, 2001

Site Representative Gubanc was on annual leave this week. Staff members Hunt and Massie were at ORNL to review radiation engineering and ALARA planning for the building 3019 U-233 container inspection.

A. S-1 Visit: Secretary Abraham will be visiting the Oak Ridge area, including Y-12, June 18 along with Senator Fred Thompson and Representative Zach Wamp. General Gordon will also be at Y-12 to look at Quality Evaluation.

B. 3019 Radiation Safety Review: Staff members Hunt and Massie were at building 3019 to review radiological protection aspects of the U-233 container inspection and repackaging effort. The design of the process, including the shielded inspection and transfer components, appeared to be acceptable. The ALARA plan indicates worker exposures will be well below ORNL and DOE guidelines. The staff suggested that improvements to the current posture could be made by providing some temporary shielding around the inspection chamber for streaming protection and assigning a radiological engineer to the facility for the duration of the operation.

C. Y-12 Disassembly: As reported last week, the NNSA Readiness Assessment (RA) for the new disassembly campaign was terminated by DOE, following a letter from BWXT requesting the RA be suspended. DOE officially transmitted the termination notice to BWXT on June 11 along with the information developed by DOE prior to the termination. The DOE report notes a lack of readiness in four major areas: Hardware/Equipment, Line Management, Procedures and Safety Analysis. It is not clear at this time if DOE will require BWXT to perform the contractor RA again or at what step in the process the DOERA will resume. There is no firm schedule for resumption. BWXT has two separate teams examining the problems with this and other recent RAs and reporting to management. The DOE letter also requires BWXT to provide a Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) for the generic issues identified by the RA team. One specific area identified by the RA team was operational and configuration management issues with the walk in hood used in the evolution. The particle detectors in the hoods were found to be set to alarm at a level of 33,000 particles over an 8 second period. Inspection of the hood on 6/15 indicates that the hood may exhaust to the room HVAC exhaust system, an unfiltered system. BWXT is providing a technical justification for the system design.

C. Y-12 Material Storage: The Board's May 29, 2001 letter on Material Storage Facilities was picked up by a number of media outlets, including Associated Press and the Knoxville News Sentinel. As noted last week, BWXT has made some progress in material removal from building 81-22. Mr. Coones toured this building and noted that approximately 25% of the building had been vacated. The actual quantity of material removed and hazard abated was not available. The material has been moved to two other substantial warehouses and one metal B-24 box outside 81-22. Some of the excess material in building 9720-14 had also been removed.

cc: Board Members