

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 10, 2000

TO: J.K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: Paul F. Gubanc and David T. Moyle, Oak Ridge Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending March 10, 2000

A. Y-12 Building 9212: On February 11th, we identified that the lighting and housekeeping in 9212's E-Wing had deteriorated to a point that demanded immediate action. To facility management's credit they quickly responded, dictating that relamping commence at once and that the large accumulations of trash be removed over the next several weeks. On Tuesday, Mr. Gubanc walked down E-Wing again to discover that while some progress is being made it is much too modest to be considered satisfactory; especially considering that the workforce has not been otherwise occupied with production work during this period. We have again reiterated to DOE and contractor management the need for prompt and substantive corrective action. (1-C, 2-A)

B. Y-12 Waste Accumulation: In many of the unoccupied spaces around the Y-12 Plant, bulk waste containers and numerous bags have been accumulating (see item on 9212 E-Wing). Much of this waste is defective or obsolete hardware, renovation debris, or combustible trash, much of it potentially contaminated with uranium compounds. Several barriers exist to the expeditious disposal of this material including controls associated with nuclear material accountability, economic discard evaluations and waste characterization (e.g., asbestos, RCRA). With the recent DOE announcement that nuclear waste shipments to the Nevada Test Site may resume, and the expected near-term deployment of a high-density waste assay capability at Oak Ridge, it appears appropriate to reevaluate the ability to disposition the Y-12 waste inventories. (1-C)

C. Building 9212 Fissile Material Handling Restart: The management self-assessment (MSA) continued this week with personnel interviews and mock container movements. The MSA tested all twelve facility organizations responsible for fissile material movements. Each organization was represented by a team of two operators and one supervisor. Drills were conducted to demonstrate container movements and test responses to abnormal conditions. Mr. Moyle observed one scenario which presented the operators with a container movement to a storage location which was already filled. The pre-job brief considered contingencies for abnormal events, and enabled the operators to complete the move by placing the container in an empty storage location on the same rack after verifying compliance with postings. The MSA team was generally impressed with the performance of the demonstrated container moves. The resulting two post-start findings and seven observations are relatively benign and will be documented in an MSA report which is due out today. The LMES ORR will be conducted next week, and assuming readiness is demonstrated, the DOE ORR should begin the week of March 20. (2-A)

cc: Board Members