

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 6, 2000

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Paul F. Gubanc and David T. Moyle, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending October 6, 2000

Mr. Moyle was on annual leave all week.

A. Y-12 Dismantlement: The contractor's Management Self-Assessment (MSA) report on the upcoming dismantlement campaign was issued October 3. A quick reading of the report indicates that the contractor has captured many of the issues identified by the Board staff. Two items not captured, however, are the lack of engineered controls to deal with large amounts of expected contamination and possibly non-conservative chemical reaction calculations in the safety analysis.

On a related matter, on September 26, a disassembly operating crew had their lifting equipment come apart during use. Aside from the issues of inadequate pre-use inspection and failure to incorporate lessons-learned (Y-12 had issued an alert for this sort of problem in June), the operators failed to stop and notify supervision but instead reassembled the equipment and proceeded. (The supervisor, upon later learning of the event, stopped the job.) Contractor management and the cognizant DOE Fac Rep believe that, despite this event, the operators will respond properly in the future. (2-A)

B. Enriched Uranium Operations (EUO): On September 29, EUO discovered approximately a gallon of water in an inactive dry vacuum system within Building 9212. Subsequent investigation revealed the water to contain low levels of uranium such that criticality was not possible. The source of water has not been identified though rainwater intrusion is suspected. This week, Mr. Gubanc walked down the system and noted that its physical appearance differs little from many of the other systems in Building 9212, some of which do have substantial fissile material holdups. DOE is pressing EUO to evaluate whether these higher holdup systems are at risk. From our perspective, Y-12's acceptance of gross roof leaks and standing water in fissile material storage areas seems to be more at the heart of this problem. (In 1998, LMES implemented a Y-12 roof maintenance program but then didn't fund it in 1999 or 2000.) We will take up this matter with DOE management. (2-A)

C. Y-12 Response to ISM Verification: This week, Mr. Gubanc reviewed the status of corrective actions which resulted from the August ISM verification review.

1. LMES has not yet been able to convince either DOE or ourselves that they clearly understand the full impact or effectiveness of their maintenance corrective action plan. We remain concerned that LMES management is stripping away compensatory measures based on incomplete information and without effecting any fundamental lasting change.
2. A corrective action plan to address overdue preventative maintenance and inspections continues to languish in draft form. Command and control over the implementation is diffused making integrated understanding of progress difficult at best.
3. Y-12 fire protection is attempting to assemble a resource estimate for a fully-compliant program. Upon completion, a plan to achieve and maintain a compliant status will be proposed. In the interim, LMES asserts they have taken compensatory measures although an hour-long discussion with the cognizant manager didn't crisply reveal the entirety and basis for what these were.
4. On October 4, DOE formally requested the contractor to submit an integrated corrective action plan to address the ISM report findings by November 30, 2000. (1-C)

cc: Board Members