

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 7, 2000

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, D. J. Grover, RFETS Site Representatives

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending July 7, 2000

Mr. Owen was out of the office this week. Mr. Grover was on leave Monday and Tuesday.

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). RFETS completed leak testing of the stabilization furnace glovebox. However, the burn-in testing of the furnaces that was planned for this week has been delayed due to concerns with the potential for off-gassing during the testing. Even though this off-gassing is expected to be only an irritant and not hazardous, the testing will be conducted after the glovebox has been connected to the building ventilation system. While this will not cause a delay in the start-up of the system, it will increase the risk of future delay should heating elements fail or other problems arise. (3-A)

Facility Representatives. Two facility representatives (FR) have received temporary promotions in the authorization basis group under the Rocky Flats Field Office (RFFO) Assistant Manager for Engineering. These promotions have resulted in a FR shortage in Buildings 707 and 371. Currently, there is only 1 FR qualified for Building 707 and 4 for Building 371, however all but one, one of the recently promoted individuals, are currently assigned to other buildings. As a result, his promotion has been delayed approximately a month until a replacement is qualified. RFFO is evaluating alternatives to reorganize the FR staff to meet the changing missions of the facilities and to remedy the staffing shortages. RFFO also has an additional 2 individuals in the early stages of qualification for Building 371. The hazards involved in the facility, the increasing level of activity as new deactivation and decommissioning activities initiate concurrently with continuing stabilization operations for residues and special nuclear material, as well as recurrent contractor operational violations emphasize the need to return FR staffing to the minimum level and to optimal levels as soon as possible. (1-B)

Public Interaction. The site reps. discussed the current status of the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System with a member of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board.

cc: Board Members