

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 17, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: R. Arcaro, Hanford Site Representative
M. Sautman, Hanford Site Representative

SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending December 17, 1999

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): On Friday, Fluor Daniel Hanford announced their decision to award the PFP contract to Westinghouse Safety Management Solutions (WSMS).

PNNL polycube testing was shut down again after a furnace component broke during the third run. DOE and PFP personnel have decided to use testing data generated to date and bounding calculations to make a "go/no go" decision on polycube oxidation by the end of December. In addition, recent events threaten the April start of residue cementation. Initially, WDOE was only requiring a RCRA Part A permit since the expected duration was less than 6 months. However, now that the duration is a full year, WDOE is requiring a RCRA closure plan for the process. According to PFP personnel, a closure plan typically takes 4 or 7 months to be completed, depending on the type chosen. This requirement is not reflected in the schedule nor is it currently funded. (3-A)

B. Tank 101-SY Transfer: On December 17, DOE-ORP completed its readiness assessment (RA) and authorized the waste transfer and a subsequent back dilution of Tank 101-SY. The initial transfer and back dilution is expected to remediate the level rise experienced in Tank 101-SY as a result of flammable gas retention. Two relatively minor pre-start findings from the RA were closed and the contractor began prerequisites for the transfer before the end of the day. The actual transfer is expected to begin late the evening of December 17. A total of 88,000 gallons will be transferred out of 101-SY. (3-A)

C. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): Cold testing of the Fuel Retrieval System and the Integrated Water Treatment System was scheduled to begin by December 31, 1999. In systematically evaluating preparations for meeting this milestone, the contractor determined that several significant activities were as yet still required prior to the initiation of testing. It is now likely that the testing will not commence until January. The activities that still must be completed include several prerequisite equipment checks, performance of in-basin training, emergency drills, and the finalization of start-up plan. Starting cold testing by December 31 is a criterion for removal of the project from the DOE-HQ "watch list" of troubled projects. Hot testing is still scheduled to begin in April. (1-C)

cc: Board members