

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 24, 2003

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending January 24, 2003

Building 371 Conduct of Operations. This week, RFETS reported two occurrences involving nuclear material handling/movement that indicated failure to properly use procedures by Building 371 personnel. These occurrences were:

- Personnel were planning to move a just-packaged DOE-STD-3013 oxide containers on a two-position cart to a room for temporary storage; however, administrative paperwork was not available to allow completion of that move. Subsequently, the supervisor placed the two-position cart with these containers in a vault. This move was in violation of the governing material movement procedure which required that these containers be placed in 10-gallon drums for vault storage (the drums have secured lids; two-position carts do not have secured lids). As oxide moisture measurement results were not yet available, the DOE-STD-3013 containers were considered "potentially vulnerable." Use of 10-gallon drums was recently required for this situation by the Building 371 Basis for Interim Operation (see site rep. report of December 13, 2002). Fact-finding by Building 371 management revealed that personnel had been aware of the recent procedure change on use of 10-gallon drums for such vault storage; however, the procedure was not being used in a deliberate manner when proceeding with placing the containers in the vault and the requirement was missed.

- In late December and early January, onsite transfers from Building 371 to the 750 Pad of low-purity oxides in pipe overpack components (POCs) were accomplished at a lower level of onsite transfer control (level-2 in lieu of level-1) than required by the governing procedure and applicable authorization basis. The primary difference in these onsite transfer control levels is that level-1 restricts transfer vehicle speed to 15 mph to reduce the risk of a vehicle accident. As reported on December 20th, Building 371 had started blend-down and packaging of low-purity oxides into POCs. Onsite transfers of all other materials in POCs prior to December, however, had required only level-2 controls. The personnel preparing for the transfers did not use the procedure in a deliberate manner and missed the requirement to specify level-1 transfer controls for these oxides.

The site rep. discussed these occurrences and the lack of deliberate use of procedures in these operations with DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill management. Kaiser-Hill management stated that reinforcement training will be conducted with Building 371 supervisory personnel on proper, deliberate use of procedures in conducting nuclear operations. (1-C)

cc

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