

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 11, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
J. Kent Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director
FROM: C. H. Keilers / R. T. Davis
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending February 11, 2000

SRS FY 2001 Budget. Recommendation 94-1 commitments are underfunded by about \$43M, as expected, in the President's FY 01 proposed budget released on Monday. Compared to FY 00, the SRS budget increases by \$130M (\$1.642B total). The DOE-EM portion grows by \$71M (\$1.339B total). The Nuclear Material Stabilization budget increases by \$63M (\$423M total). That \$63M is mostly one-time increases and includes about \$13M for infrastructure and about \$38M for the HEU blend-down program (which came from deferring salt disposition activities in FY 01). The budget also contains funding to begin F-Canyon deactivation studies. Identified budget shortfalls impact several projects, including: STD-3013 stabilization (\$30.8M), AmCm acceleration (\$12M), salt disposition (\$38M), and spent fuel treatment and storage (melt & dilute, \$12M). The SRS budget assumes WSRC will achieve significant efficiencies, which may require a workforce restructuring.

HEU Blend-down Program: This week, DOE-SR formally identified to DOE-HQ that funding is needed no later than April 1, 2000 to initiate preliminary design. The outlook for the TVA-DOE agreement improved last month when \$38M was identified for FY 01, but the agreement is again in jeopardy because of a conflicting request by DOE to use both TVA Sequoyah reactors (PWRs) for tritium production. It appears that a policy decision has been made prohibiting the use of off-specification HEU in a unit producing tritium. TVA is considering using off-specification HEU in the Browns Ferry units (BWRs) but studying that option may delay the agreement. The site reps understand that this issue has been raised to the attention of DP-1, MD-1, and EM-1. (3.a)

FB-Line: The SRS alternative approach to meeting Recommendation 94-1 with a flat, out-year budget depends on safe and efficient FB-Line operation (site rep weekly, 2/4/00). However, this dependence may be this strategy's greatest weakness. While FB-Line is making progress on vault clean-up (55% complete), both the DOE Type B investigation report issued this week and the WSRC Facility Evaluation Board review conducted last month indicate the need for a dramatic step improvement in integrated safety management, bagless transfer can quality assurance, and operational and radiological controls. Facility management is pursuing radiological and quality improvements, but timing may affect when mainline operations can resume. This is currently planned for late March. (1.c, 3.a)

Criticality Controls: Staff member T. Burns and the site reps conducted a review this week on criticality controls. While the existing framework for developing controls is mature, WSRC could use more rigor in identifying alternative controls that are not subject to single failures. (3.a)

K-Area Material Storage (KAMS): On Tuesday, DOE-SR authorized WSRC to begin receiving Rocky Flats plutonium in 9975/STD-3013 containers and storing these containers in the KAMS Phase I storage area. Shipments are now expected to begin in mid to late Spring, 2000. (3.a)