

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 16, 1998

TO: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: Paul F. Gubanc, Oak Ridge Site Representative

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending October 16, 1998

Mr. Gubanc was not in Monday and Wednesday for the federal holiday and personal leave.

A. Y-12 Enriched Uranium (EU) Phase-A2 Restart: LMES expects this weekend to declare operational readiness of EU Phase-A2 processes, with some exceptions, and to start the LMES Operational Readiness Review (ORR) on October 19. As of October 16, the exceptions included:

1. The Holden Gas Furnace is still undergoing modifications, testing, and procedure revisions to fully satisfy its safety basis controls (i.e., NFPA standards 54 & 86). The furnace may not be ready to operate before the LMES ORR ends on October 23.
2. **45** "Pre-A2" Open Issues in the LMES commitment tracking system ("ESAMS"). Several of these appear to indicate that fundamental problems previously identified during Phase A1 have not yet been corrected (e.g., fire protection).

Staff member Monique Helfrich will join me next week to observe the LMES ORR.

B. Y-12 Building 9212, E-Wing: On October 15, I toured E-Wing (EU casting) with the DOE Facility Representative and had the following observations:

1. Respiratory protection is still required to access E-Wing. To date, 14 workers have been confirmed by fecal bioassay to have committed doses of between 900 and 25 mrem. None have exceeded the site's 1000 mrem administrative control limit. (See 10/2/98 report.)
2. No work was performed in E-Wing that morning due to a lack of plastic booties for the workers. The staff expeditiously obtained them for the Fac Rep and I but not for themselves.
3. Housekeeping in the basement of E-Wing was extremely poor with large stacks of waste and old equipment cluttering the floor. Informal postings on storage racks were also noted.

C. Oak Ridge Operations Office (ORO) Facility Representatives (Fac Reps): Many of the ORO Fac Reps have been qualified and in their positions for approximately two years. My experience suggests that after 2-3 years, Fac Reps (like most people) have mastered their duties and start to search for new challenges. On October 16, I met with the Asst. Manager for ES&H, Bob Poe, who is also the ORO Fac Rep Program Manager, to discuss Fac Rep career planning. I suggested that ORO senior management start developing options now, before requests for new assignments (or departures) start occurring. The following ideas were discussed.

1. Directed periodic rotations as are done with the DNFSB Site Reps. Reassignment to non-Fac Rep positions has the added benefits of infusing the Fac Reps technical understanding into the balance of ORO and drawing new talent into the Fac Rep pool.
2. Temporary details to develop new skills and provide career broadening.
3. Assignment of very specific, limited duration, high profile, programmatic tasks to Fac Reps to expand their personal contacts within ORO. (This would require very explicit controls to assure the Fac Reps didn't get overburdened or grossly diverted from their primary duties.)

I will follow up with ORO later this year to see what progress has been made in this regard.

cc: Board members