

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 8, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
K. Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director
FROM: D. F. Owen, D. J. Grover, RFETS Site Representatives
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending October 8, 1999

Don Owen was on leave Friday, October 8.

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). RFETS formalized their technical position to eliminate the requirement for a contamination free inner can outer surface from DOE-STD 3013 and submitted it to the DOE Nuclear Materials Stewardship Project Office. A DOE Headquarters Technical Review Board (TRB) tasked a team of technical experts to review the RFETS technical basis this week at RFETS. The team considered three alternatives, retain the requirement, eliminate it, or identify a contamination level based with appropriate technical justification. The team could not identify a technical basis for maintaining the current requirement. However, the team identified 2 functional requirements for limiting contamination levels, worker exposure and contamination of the outer container weld. The team will prepare a report detailing their findings and submit it to the TRB. The TRB will then decide which course of action to take.

Building 991 Authorization Basis Implementation. Building 991 currently stores transuranic waste and conducts certain other activities such as drum head-space gas sampling but is currently under an old authorization basis (AB). During the last few weeks, efforts to transition to a new Safety Analysis Report (SAR) consistent with its current mission have revealed several inadequacies indicating that the facility has historically been operating outside its current AB including inadequate implementation and tracking of AB controls. As a result, operations in the building have been terminated. This situation is similar in certain respects to that observed in the Building 776/777 complex (see the Site Rep. reports of August 12 and August 20, 1999) in that the attention being placed on implementing a new authorization basis is revealing past lack of formality and completeness in implementing the existing authorization basis. The need for improved training and guidance of Building 991 personnel and program infrastructure upgrades along the lines being accomplished in the Building 776/777 complex appears to be recognized by RFETS management. An Independent Validation Review by Kaiser-Hill of implementation of the new Building 991 SAR controls and program infrastructure has been delayed for several weeks to allow for proper Building 991 SAR implementation.

Building 776/777 Contamination Control Tent. The site representatives met with Building 776/777 staff concerning the condition of the tent surrounding the T-1100 tank farm discussed in the October 1, 1999, RFETS activity report. The tent was ostensibly left in place for use in removing the tanks this fiscal year, however, subsequent deactivation activities have led to improved tent design for these activities. Plans to remove of the current tent are underway to prepare the area for installation of a new containment followed by tank removal.

cc: Board Members