

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 16, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: R. F. Warther, M. T. Sautman

SUBJ: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending January 16, 1998

Salt Pyro-oxidation. Three batches of salt were finally stabilized Friday. The module, however, had to be evacuated twice because an unrelated bagout job set off air monitor alarms. Furnace operations were not able to be performed earlier in the week because of a leak in the cooling tower water system, a preventable criticality infraction, and the unavailability of self reading pocket dosimeters. The water leak resulted in nuclear operations being terminated since the leak made the emergency diesel-generator inoperable. The facility representatives (FR) believe that facility management inappropriately lifted the termination and tried to start new nuclear operations before the leak was fixed. The FRs also challenged running the furnaces without doing an analysis to see whether the furnaces could be safely operated without a heat sink for the process cooling water. Problems with the repair of the water leak included having the job temporarily shut down by K-H for industrial safety concerns and with the control of the activity by both DynCorp and SSOC.

Pit Shipments. On December 29, RFETS stopped packaging pits for shipment to Pantex because of funding questions at Pantex. DOE-EM told RFETS Thursday to restart pit shipments although it still is not clear whether DP or EM will be funding Pantex. Based on discussions with the Board's Pantex Site Rep, Pantex has not received this word as of yet. The Pantex position is that until they receive word from DOE-HQ to receive shipments, they will continue to refuse to accept shipments. The Site Reps (Pantex and RFETS) are following this issue and will report on continued progress.

ISMS Review. The review team largely has completed its ISMS review at RFETS. Most of the significant findings have been reported to the Board in previous site rep and staff weekly reports. One of the most significant issues relates to the flowdown of requirements contained in the DOE orders through the contract to the contractors' procedures. Many sites use S/RIDs to accomplish this. However, RFETS determined that S/RIDs as defined under the original Recommendation 90-2 were of limited value, and that the Level 1 procedures provided bounding controls for many baseline activities. The staff agrees with this position. However, neither K-H nor RFFO has a firmly established program to ensure that the requirements of the DOE orders are adequately captured in the K-H Level 1 procedures and contractually enforceable. Specifically, a formal cross-walk between the DOE order requirements and the Level 1 procedures does not exist for all functional areas. Based on discussions with the K-H VP for Engineering, the contract will be modified to include a current, applicable set of three-digit and four-digit orders, and a formal cross-walk between the order requirements and Level 1 procedures will be completed by late spring or summer 98.

Meetings with the Public. The Site Reps met with John Swartout of Senator Allard's staff. He had concerns relating to production over safety issues and implementation of the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement (RFCA). The Site Reps also had an encouraging meeting with Steve Gunderson, the new RFCA Coordinator for CDPHE. Topics discussed included priority issues for each organization as well as Board/CDPHE interactions for both Recommendation 94-1 and decommissioning activities. Both these individuals were invited to the Board's discussions at RFETS.

cc: Board Members