

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

September 12, 1997

**TO:** G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director  
**FROM:** P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives  
**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending September 12, 1997

Staff members Barton, Hadjian and Wille were on site to review the Spent Nuclear Fuel project.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Activities:

1. **“Show Cause” Letter:** B&W Hanford Company responded to Fluor Daniel Hanford’s (FDH) “show cause” letter on September 4. FDH’s response is expected within days.
2. **Tank 241-Z-361:** 241-Z-361 is an underground, steel-lined concrete, 50000 gallon capacity PFP tank. It served as a Pu-bearing waste settling tank during the 1950s and 60s and was isolated in the early 1970s. When isolated, visual measurements and sample analysis estimated the sludge inventory at 23000 gallons containing 20-75 kgs of Pu. No monitoring or inspection of the tank has occurred since. Documentation relative to this tank, including current PFP plans to reassess it, have been forwarded to Dr. Kouts and the staff (Massie).
3. **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Inspection:** DOE-RL has agreed to proceed with next week’s IAEA inspection of plutonium storage at PFP. A specific action plan with compensatory measures (i.e., continuous oversight by DOE-RL) is in place for this work.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): The contractor and DOE-RL teams tasked with reviewing the new proposed SNFP schedule issued their reports this week. Both teams concluded that the proposed schedule appears to be sound and that there is little opportunity to shorten the 14 month delay. The critical path activity in the proposed schedule is the Cold Vacuum Drying (CVD) Facility. CVD has already lost several months due to a number of sequential cascading delays:

- delay in finalizing the design
- delay in finalizing the safety analysis
- delay in DOE-RL comment resolution and Safety Evaluation Report issuance
- delay in initiating equipment procurement

Although the CVD facility is currently listed as the critical path sub-project, all of the other major sub-projects are within weeks of being on the critical path themselves. The Board’s staff spent one day this week looking into the specifics of the CVD delays, and will, with the assistance of Mr. Ogg, review the specifics of delays in all the major sub-projects.

C. ALARA Center of Technology (COT): The FDH ALARA COT showcases time, cost and dose reducing technical innovations to site users. (Some of these “innovations” have been available commercially for decades but are only now coming to Hanford.) At our request, Hank Hatch, FDH’s President, toured the COT with us. The COT is a very valuable but understaffed and poorly advertised resource. Mr. Hatch expressed his intent to foster higher visibility for the COT.

cc: Board Members