

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 25, 1997

TO: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending July 25, 1997

Mr. Gubanc was on leave all week.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Activities:

1. Emergency Response (ER) Evaluation: On July 24, DOE-RL issued a draft report of its evaluation of the emergency and medical response to the Plutonium Reclamation Facility explosion. Key findings from the draft report include; a) failure to provide timely emergency classification and notification, b) failure to properly implement emergency response actions, c) failure to initiate appropriate actions to address personnel exposures, and d) failure to adequately prepare for emergency response to chemical hazards.

2. Fissile Material Handling: Early last week, DOE-RL supported limited fissile material handling at the PFP with additional (compensatory) oversight so that the facility could conduct a required safeguards and security inventory. However, due to the inability of the facility to pass the DOE-RL readiness assessment for fissile material handling, DOE-HQ has questioned the safety of operations at PFP even with compensatory oversight. Therefore, all fissile material handling at PFP is suspended pending further direction from DOE.

B. Canister Storage Building (CSB) Construction: Mowat Construction Co., the constructor for the CSB, presented their corrective action plan for crane safety to Duke Engineering Services Hanford (DESH) and Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) on July 18. DESH and FDH plan to make a determination of the adequacy of this plan by early next week. Meanwhile, crane operations remain shut down, and this prevents movement of structural steel for the purpose of weld repair.

C. First PUREX Surveillance: On July 22, Mr. Ogg observed the first quarterly surveillance of the PUREX facility in its deactivated state. Operators from both Babcock and Wilcox Hanford Co. (BWHC) and Bechtel Hanford Inc. conducted the surveillance accompanied by two DOE-RL facility representatives and the BWHC surveillance manger. Overall, the procedures appeared adequate, the operators were well trained and briefed, and the hazards within the facility were well characterized. The operators, DOE-RL facility reps. and Mr. Ogg noted several minor discrepancies that PUREX management committed to evaluate and correct as necessary.

D. DOE-RL Facility Representatives (FR): DOE-RL has identified one person from within the RL line management ranks to fill its one posted GS-14 FR position. Screening of candidates continues in order to fill ten posted GS-13 FR positions. To date, DOE-RL reports that they have identified eight potentially suitable candidates.

cc: Board Members