

# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 27, 1996

**TO:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

**FROM:** R.F. Warther, M.T. Sautman

**SUBJECT:** RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending December 27, 1996

**Recommendation 94-1.** The Site Reps reported that K-H and SSOC have identified 29 items that may be in contact with plastic, and that SSOC had preliminary plans to inspect 100 of 283 items that were not repacked. Additional data was provided this week. The number of items potentially in contact with plastic has increased to 65. A total of 111 items were baseline weighed following the repackaging campaign last year. Of these 111, eleven are stored in the B371 stacker/retriever, and another 35 are stored in glove boxes. These 46 items (11 + 35) are not stored in contact with plastic by procedure. Additionally, 23 of the 35 items stored in gloveboxes have been inspected, and none were in contact with plastic. The 65 items potentially in contact with plastic are alloyed, delta phase Pu. The oxide increase for most of these items is estimated to be between 0 and 10 grams. Some may exceed a 10 gram increase in oxide. K-H has tasked SSOC to deliver a schedule for repacking these items, which SSOC has yet to deliver. It is likely that some of the material will not be repackaged in a timely manner. First, six of the 65 items will require criticality engineering to develop limits. The latest estimate from criticality engineering is that development of the limits will require approximately 400 hours of analysis protracted over about six months. Second, the availability of B776/777, where many of these items are located will also affect SSOC's ability to repack these items.

**Recommendation 94-3.** As part of the 94-3 analysis of Building 371, 30 positions were identified in the Stacker/Retriever that could not be demonstrated as safe during an EBE. K-H and SSOC have removed 30 pallets of material stored in these positions. K-H and SSOC plan to discuss modifications to the software controlling the Stacker/Retriever when the manufacturer's representatives arrive on site in January. This will provide an engineered control to ensure no material is stored in these positions.

The Site Reps were also asked to determine the status of funding for the Interim Storage Vault. According to a budget document received, FY97 funding for the ISV stands at \$1.9 million. This was discussed with one senior RFFO individual, who was not aware that the funding levels were this high. The Site Reps will confirm this number with the Manager of the RFFO upon her return from vacation.

The \$538 million budget for RFFO was reviewed. Less than 20% of the budget is actually used for sustained risk reduction activities. The other 80% is dedicated to: (1) legacy costs (e.g., Pu and Be studies, pension plans); (2) environmental compliance (e.g., compliance with CDPHE and EPA regulations); (3) fixed operating costs (e.g., permits, security, utilities); (4) costs of integration; and (5) immediate hazard reductions. Immediate hazard reduction is differentiated from sustained hazard reduction. Immediate hazard reduction refers to some Recommendation 94-1 activities, hydrogen reduction, tank draining, and similar activities. Sustained hazard reduction refers to activities such as building D&D, onsite storage of some radioactive materials, etc. The Site Reps have requested a copy of the budget reflecting these categories and will forward a copy to the Board and staff.

**Personnel changes** Dana Lindsay, the RFFO Chief Counsel has accepted a job from ICF Kaiser. This brings the total number of senior personnel accepting positions with the contractor to four. As reported previously,

the DOE Engineer (Brockman) accepted a position with CH2M Hill in August, the Residue and processing Assistant Manager (Smith) accepted a position with BNFL in July, and the Operations Branch Head (Riscutto) accepted a job with K-H shortly after award of the contract.

**Interactions with Public.** The Site Reps (Warther) met with Tim Holeman and Councilmember Hank Stovall of Broomfield on Monday. The purpose of the discussion was to respond to questions regarding safety at the site, including the cleanup mission. Much of the discussion focused on safety culture at the site. Councilmember Stovall stated that he was concerned with the exodus of senior qualified personnel, as well as a rash of recent incidents at the site. The Board's concerns with the same issues was communicated, and the fact that the exodus of personnel from the site made cleanup more difficult was explained. Councilmember Stovall was an employee of the ES&H branch at AT&T prior to becoming a Councilmember, and seemed to be very familiar with RFETS' safety issues, as well as conduct of operations issues. The meeting seemed to go well.

cc: Board Members