

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 9, 2009

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending October 9, 2009

R. Quirk was off-site this week. Board staff member R. Raabe was on-site to observe a Technology Readiness Assessment for the Sludge Treatment Project. Staff members E. Elliott, J. Troan, L. Zull, and R. Verhaagen conducted reviews of planned activities at the River Corridor Closure and Plateau Remediation projects. These reviews included discussions on the ARRA-funded activities, required readiness reviews, safety strategy, and work planning and controls.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The Office of River Protection (ORP) notified the contractor that it was unacceptable for the contractor to approve a change to the authorization basis (AB) that deleted quality requirements for safety-significant (SS) structures, systems, and components (SSCs). Prior to the change, SSCs designated SS to provide protection from toxicological hazards had to meet NQA-1 compliant requirements, but this requirement was deleted without explicit concurrence of ORP. In August, the site rep questioned ORP about this contractor-approved change to the Preliminary Documented Safety Analysis (PDSA) (see Activity Report 8/14/09). ORP directed the contractor to take the following actions: rescind the change to the PDSA; procure SSCs to the quality requirements described in the Safety Requirements Document if they are functionally classified as safety class (SC) or SS for any reason; revise procedures to ensure quality requirements are applied to SC and SS SSCs; conduct extent of condition evaluations for SS SSCs released for procurement or fabrication with downgraded quality requirements and immediately notify ORP of all SSCs found with this condition; and implement corrective actions to preclude further contractor-approved changes that are not consistent with ORP's procedure for AB management.

Waste and Fuels Management Project: An Interim Storage Cask dropped less than a foot while being placed by a crane on a concrete surface at the Canister Storage Building complex. No evidence of damage to the cask could be seen and no radiological releases were discovered. The contractor ensured the cask was in a safe configuration and is investigating the possible causes. The contractor determined that a recovery plan is required before proceeding.

The Richland Operations Office (RL) sent a letter expressing concerns about a series of events that have occurred related to compliance with safety basis controls, assumptions, and requirements. RL noted five events or issues that occurred between August 24 and September 20, 2009: three events involved critical lift, one issue was related to the use of combustible materials, and another issue was associated with the operation of an excavator at a retrieval trench. RL requested that the contractor report on the actions to address common factors from these events and provide the supporting analysis.

In the Startup Notification Report submitted in August 2009, the contractor proposed using a management assessment as the readiness review for the first phase of the Next Generation Retrieval activity (see Activity Report 9/4/09), but RL subsequently rejected this approach. RL determined that a contractor Readiness Assessment with RL oversight is the appropriate readiness review for the start of retrieval activities at the 12B burial grounds in 200 East Area.