

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 15, 2010

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending October 15, 2010

W. Linzau was off-site this week.

Tank Farms: The Office of River Protection (ORP) rejected the contractor's corrective action plan (CAP) for problems ORP had identified in an assessment of the radiological control (Rad Con), corrective action management (CAM), and emergency preparedness programs (see Activity Report 8/27/10). ORP noted the CAP was incomplete and did not address the specific actions that would justify removing the compensatory measures ORP directed midway through the assessment (see Activity Report 4/16/10). ORP also noted the CAP needs to clearly define the desired condition of the Rad Con and CAM programs when the corrective actions are completed as well as the steps the contractor will take to reach the desired conditions.

The contractor determined that the head space in waste catch tank 244-A was at 26 percent of the lower flammability limit (LFL). The 19,600-gallon stainless steel tank had collected waste that leaked into the 244-A pump pit but is now isolated except for its passive ventilation. The contractor noted they had a prior analysis that concluded the flammable gas levels could exceed 25 percent but would not reach 100 percent of LFL. The contractor had not routinely sampled the head gas in the past but had been measuring the waste level. They will sample the tank on a weekly basis while they develop corrective actions.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The Federal Project Director determined that ORP personnel assigned to the project will follow the new ORP process for performing assessments and surveillances (see Activity Report 9/10/10). Training of these people began this week.

The site rep met with the facility representative (FR) for a walkdown of the LAW facility and to discuss the plans for observing testing. The ORP acceptance inspectors observe construction acceptance tests and the FRs tend to focus on occupational safety issues. The FR's manager subsequently told the site rep that the first major systems to be turned over for startup testing will be in the Balance of Facility (BOF), with the electrical distribution system being the first in mid-to late-2012. System startup testing will begin in the Lab and LAW facilities approximately a year later.

Plateau Remediation Contractor (PRC): The contractor declared a potential inadequacy in the safety analysis (PISA) because the filters on some waste containers weighing more than 900 pounds were not properly torqued and they could come loose during transport. Six years ago, the filter manufacturer determined the filters should be torqued to 15 rather than 10 foot-pounds, but it is unclear if this was formally communicated to the previous contractor. When the new contractor learned of this last year, they concluded the condition was not an unreviewed safety question (USQ). However, during annual review of the transportation DSA, it was concluded the USQ determination was inadequate. No drums weighing 900 pounds or more were created since last October, but it is unclear how many legacy drums above this weight exist.