

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 25, 2008

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending April 25, 2008

Board staff member S. Lewis was onsite to observe the readiness assessment (RA) for restart of waste retrievals at Tank Farms.

Tank Farms: The Office of River Protection (ORP) directed the contractor to initiate a process which will incrementally bring the safety basis (SB) into compliance with the DOE-STD-1186. This direction is the result of observations made in the ORP assessment of Specific Administrative Controls (SACs) (see Hanford Activity Report 2/1/08.) The new process requires that all future SB amendment submissions include a rescreening of significant facility worker hazardous conditions that are associated with the proposed changes. If the rescreening indicates that a hazardous condition remains, a combination of safety-significant systems, structures, and components or a SAC will be required and will have to be addressed in the SB amendment.

The contractor started their RA for resumption of waste retrieval from single shell tank C-109. The contractor committed to perform this assessment as a corrective action for the S-102 tank waste spill, although the activities would not have required a RA under the contractor procedures. The Office of River Protection (ORP) is providing significant oversight of the RA.

Safety Management and Operations (EM-60) Audit: A team from EM-60 performed an audit of the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) Quality Assurance program in the areas of oversight by both ORP and the contractor, the adequacy of design control and corrective action programs, and procurement. A number of preliminary conclusions include: the reorganization of ORP including additional technical staff provides an opportunity for continued improvement; design control has improved since the last evaluation in May 2007; contractor internal oversight has resulted in enhancements to the design process; and ORP and contractor corrective active tracking programs require enhancements.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): ORP chartered independent reviewers to assess the contractor's process used to select and interpret nuclear and process safety requirements. The review team provided some preliminary observations including an opportunity for improvement in the contractor management oversight of the process. The team also evaluated ORP oversight of this process and noted that ORP personnel attended about 20 percent of integrated design safety meetings. The 20 percent attendance was considered adequate by the review team and ORP management. The acceptance of the low attendance is consistent with site rep's previous observation on ORP's lack of oversight in the detailed design of safety systems (see Hanford Activity Report 3/7/08).

River Corridor Closure Project: The site rep met with contractor management to discuss the status of the decontamination and demolition effort at Building 327. The project is planning an independent validation review prior to removing the zone 1 ventilation system later this summer and then downgrading the facility to less than Hazard Category 3. After the facility is downgraded, the work to remove the hot cells, grout them and ship them to low-level burial ground will require opening the canyon and installing a gantry crane.