

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 23, 2001

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: Paul F. Gubanc and David T. Moyle, Oak Ridge Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending March 23, 2001

Mr. Gubanc was on leave all week.

A. Y-12 Building 9215 Ventilation: More than three years since an unreviewed safety question identified the unfiltered exhaust condition in Building 9215, BWXT has completed its readiness assessment (RA) for startup of a new HEPA-filtered exhaust system (Stack 979). Unfortunately, the BWXT RA failed to recognize some significant deficiencies highlighted in a recent YAO individual assessment report (IAR). One key item in this report is the lack of fire damper testing. BWXT has since inspected the dampers and found them incorrectly installed. In fact, they were the wrong dampers for the application. BWXT issued its readiness to proceed letter to YAO this week, hoping to address the prestart issues associated with the IAR in parallel with the YAO RA. The YAO manager has instead decided to delay the RA until these issues are resolved. In light of this decision, it is clear that the March 31 target date for startup will not be met. The YAO RA is not expected to start until April. (1-C)

B. Y-12 Disassembly Operations: The management self assessment (MSA) for a new disassembly campaign is expected to start next week. While the new process is a great improvement in safety and productivity over the previously proposed process, there are still some issues associated with credited safety controls that need to be resolved prior to startup. Moving the operation into an inert box clearly improves safety, but BWXT has thus far opted not to take credit for this passive design feature. Instead, an active feature associated with software controlled machine stops is highlighted in the safety documentation. However, no limiting condition of operation has been specified for this active control in the technical safety requirements. YAO safety basis personnel are currently awaiting more clarification on which specific controls are actually relied upon for safety in this operation. This issue will not be resolved prior to the MSA. (2-A)

C. Y-12 Enriched Uranium Operations (EUO) Restart: Last week we reported that the BWXT operational readiness review (ORR) for reduction and primary extraction operations resulted in 6 findings. The final report only included 5 findings (4 prestart). The other finding was withdrawn following YAO approval of vessel integrity in-service inspections and subsequent removal of the safety evaluation report condition. All BWXT ORR prestart findings were being worked this week with the goal of closing them prior to the DOE ORR. These actions included procedure and startup plan revisions. The DOE ORR team is expected to begin its review on Monday and is targeted to finish by the end of the week. The site reps will observe this review. (2-A)

cc: Board Members