

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 10, 2000

TO: K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: D. Grover and M. Sautman, Hanford Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending November 10, 2000

Spent Nuclear Fuel Project: The DOE operational readiness review (ORR) of the K-West Basin, Canister Storage Building, and Cask Transportation System continued this week with remaining activities associated with demonstrations of the multi-canister overpack (MCO) loading system and the fuel retrieval system. The ORR team has identified many findings which include the following, a failure to demonstrate the proper sealing of an MCO due to the use of non-production components, poor performance of K-West Basin radiological control technicians (RCTs), inadequate surveillance procedure of the basin leak mitigation system inventory which may have led to a technical safety requirement violation, inadequate operator knowledge of hazards and accidents which could affect safety, and conduct of operations discrepancies.

The ORR team is documenting their findings and is planning to formally brief Fluor-Hanford and DOE-Richland on 11/13/00. The cold vacuum drying facility (CVDF) continues to perform maintenance as well as train operators and RCTs in response to the terminated contractor ORR. The project hopes to resume the CVDF contractor ORR by 11/15/00. (3-A)

Plutonium Finishing Plant: Mr. Sautman observed plutonium metal brushing and bagless transfer system (BTS) operations. BTS operations have been hindered for much of the last month by leaks in the leak detection equipment seals. In addition, operators exceeded an administrative limit for the amount of potentially reactive metal brushings that could be accumulated due to confusion over whether the limit applied to plutonium or bulk weight. (3-A)

Tank Farms: Mr. Sautman had separate meetings with Fran DeLozier, CH2MHill Hanford Group (CHG) President, and Dale Allen, Sr. Vice President Double-Shell Tanks, to discuss future site rep and staff interactions with CHG as well as their response to Board tank integrity concerns. Mr. Sautman also accompanied operators during valve line-ups and observed control room operations during pre-filling of the line with water in support of the upcoming cross-site transfer. CHG is generating a work request to repaint AW valve pit markings that the site rep pointed out were fading. Earlier in the week, CHG also discovered that they have been mistakenly shutting off the encasement leak detectors for the supernate east of a diversion box rather than the slurry system's during transfers. This occurred because the procedure instructed them to turn off the south line leak detectors. However, the north-south orientation of the supernate and slurry leak detector cables switches as it passes through the diversion box. (3-A)

cc: Board Members