

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 8, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: R. Arcaro, & D. G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending January 8, 1999

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): DOE and its contractor are preparing to begin thermal stabilization of high purity plutonium oxide as part of implementation of Board Recommendation 94-1. The plant continues to work to close all remaining pre-start findings from the DOE ORR. All findings are expected to be closed by the end of the week. Verification of closure, being performed by DOE-RL line management and the DOE-RL Performance Assessment Division, is expected to be completed early next week. Start-up is expected by January 12 or 13.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) has made several personnel changes in the SNFP recently and continues to do so. Most significantly, the SNFP Engineering Manager position is now vacant and FDH is searching for a strong leader for the job. In addition FDH hired managers for the following positions: K Basins Ops Manager, K Basins Engineering Manager, SNFP ORR Manager, and Drain Valve Project Manager. Generally, FDH has recruited strong technical managers with experience at Hanford or elsewhere in the complex. The Site Representatives believe that these new managers will have a positive impact on the project.

C. Technical Qualification Program: The Site Representatives met with a representative from the DOE-RL Office of Training to discuss the status of the federal Technical Qualification Program (TQP) and implementation of Board Recommendation 93-3. Approximately 300 federal employees at Richland are covered by the TQP. Through implementation of Recommendation 93-3, 57% of the federal employees have completed the qualification requirements for their position. The remaining 43%, many of whom are new hires or recent transfers, are approximately 95% through the qualification requirements. DOE-RL has recently revised its TQP to include a continuing training element and Technical Discipline Qualification Standards (TDQS). The TDQS are being developed in response to a concern that potential Reductions-in-Force could erode critical technical skills. The TDQS include those critical skills and ensure individuals in selected critical positions maintain those skills and knowledge.

D. Senior Management Assignment: On January 5, the DOE-RL announced that Charles Hansen, Assistant Manager for Waste Management, had been selected as the Assistant Manager for Material and Facility Stabilization at the DOE Savannah River Operations Office. Mr. Hansen plans to make the move to South Carolina at the end of February. DOE-RL has not yet posted Mr. Hansen's position.

cc: Board members