

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 28, 2000

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. F. Owen, D. J. Grover, RFETS Site Representatives
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending July 28, 2000

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). The site reps. and Board staff held a video-conference with DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill management to discuss the quality, configuration control, and safety implications of the PuSPS work control occurrence (see site rep. report of July 14, 2000). While, additional cases of equipment installation prior to the completion of authorizing work packages were identified, there was no impact on quality as quality assurance steps were required only for the acceptance testing following installation. Kaiser-Hill has initiated efforts to establish the as-built condition and conduct functional testing to establish configuration control for PuSPS.

Following the video-conference, Kaiser-Hill verified that the work performed did not involve energized systems requiring a formal lockout to ensure worker safety. Kaiser-Hill also initiated a review to determine if improperly authorized and performed work on safety related equipment could affect safety or quality and not be identified by planned testing and surveillance. (3-A)

Building 707 Operations Pause. Plutonium metal size reduction operations were paused on June 22, 2000, as a result of procedural violations leading to a criticality infraction (see site rep. report of June 30, 2000). This week Kaiser-Hill completed revisions to the criticality evaluations and procedures to incorporate process efficiencies that had been in use by workers which led to the infraction. In addition, a senior supervisory watch is now required to oversee plutonium metal size reduction activities. Building 707 plans to conduct a formal dry-run early next week for DOE-RFFO and oversight organizations prior to restarting these operations. (3-A)

Work Planning and Control. The Board's letter of April 25, 2000 noted RFETS efforts to improve activity-level work planning as laid out in the revised RFETS Integrated Work Control Program (IWCP). A staff observation forwarded by the Board's letter concerned the need for effective training and mentoring of work planning personnel in implementing the revised IWCP. As noted in our June 2, 2000 report, DOE-RFFO requested that Kaiser-Hill provide specific plans for training work planning personnel on the revised IWCP and for mentoring work planning personnel during activity-level work planning under the IWCP.

Continued problems with work planning have been evident during the past several weeks (see our reports since June 30, 2000). DOE-RFFO did not consider Kaiser-Hill's plans (submitted in early July 2000) for training and mentoring of work planning personnel sufficiently detailed. Given the lack of progress in IWCP implementation, DOE-RFFO has asked that Kaiser-Hill identify root causes of the IWCP implementation problems, corrective actions addressing the root causes, and more specific plans for training and mentoring of work planning personnel. DOE-RFFO has asked that Kaiser-Hill respond to this request by August 11, 2000. (3-A, 3-B)

cc: Board Members