

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 20, 2001

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending June 22, 2001

The site rep. will be out of the office on June 21st and 22nd.

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS) Startup. Following initial startup last week, the site rep. observed PuSPS operations with plutonium being conducted this week in accordance with the approved PuSPS Startup Plan. As of this report, Kaiser-Hill has packaged plutonium metal into three DOE-STD-3013 containers and intends to complete the first eight DOE-STD-3013 containers with plutonium metal by June 22nd. Per the PuSPS Startup Plan, the first plutonium oxide material will then be stabilized in a PuSPS furnace and packaged in a DOE-STD-3013 container. (3-A)

Building 707 Authorization Basis (AB) Implementation. As reported last week, during a June 6th Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) surveillance of ventilation system equipment between the HEPA filters and the exhaust fans, visible signs of leakage bypassing the filters was discovered. Required actions per the TSR to suspend operations within 4 hours in affected areas were not taken, however, until June 12th. Fact-finding and evaluation of this issue by Kaiser-Hill and DOE-RFFO continued this week. It was identified that surveillance team personnel had reportedly informed on-duty shift management personnel of the surveillance issue on June 6th, however, there was no logging nor recollection of that communication by personnel in the shift management office.

Building 707 also reported a separate "historical" AB violation wherein required action per the TSR to suspend operations within 4 hours in affected areas were not taken for a known impairment with fire protection sprinkler system equipment in F-module. In addressing implications of the sprinkler system impairment, the AB/TSR required action was overlooked for many months until a DOE-RFFO Facility Representative recently inquired about the impairment. Only fire protection program requirements, suspending only flame or spark producing activities, had been addressed and implemented.

The site rep. discussed this apparent lack of proper handling of safety system deficiencies and follow-through to ensure AB/TSR controls are implemented with DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill management. Fact-finding and evaluation of these issues continues by DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill. The site rep. will review the results and the adequacy of corrective actions. (3-B)

cc: Board Members