

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

July 24, 1998

**TO:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director  
**FROM:** D. G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representative  
**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending July 24, 1998

Staff member Ray Daniels was on site during the week assisting with site representative duties.

A. Authorization Agreement (AA) signed: Today, July 24, John Wagoner signed the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) Authorization Agreement. The Spent Nuclear Fuel Project plans to have the AA for K-Basins ready for signature by August 10. These AAs will be forwarded to DNFSB HQ when available.

B. Operational Readiness Review (ORR) Planning: This week, Ken Keller (DOE-HQ) visited the site for familiarization tours of the W-320 project (tank C-106 sluicing) and the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP). DOE-RL plans to have Mr. Keller lead the DOE ORRs for these two activities. Mr. Keller has recommended that an additional 4-5 technical specialists participate on the W-320 ORR team, but DOE-RL is uncertain that funding can be made available to accommodate the additional travel. The site representative believes that the additional expertise will be valuable in ensuring a strong technical review of the project.

C. TWRS Privatization Contract: On July 21, DOE-RL announced its plan for the TWRS privatization contract (vitrification of high-level tank waste). The plan, which was forwarded to Congress and to the state regulators, allows BNFL, Inc. to continue with its Phase I design activities for a vitrification demonstration plant. However, the new schedule and cost are significantly different:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Previous</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Start HLW hot ops	2002	2007 (90% conf. level)
Start LAW hot ops	2002	2008 (90% conf. level)
Cost for Phase 1B - treat 10% of tank waste (1997 dollars)	\$3.2B	\$6.9B*

\* Proposed vitrification plant capable of continuing operations after Phase 1

D. N Basin Deactivation: This week Bechtel Hanford Inc. (BHI) completed deactivation of the N Basin including removal of basin water and sludge. Mr. Ogg toured the facility with representatives from DOE-RL and BHI. Although turnover to the surveillance and maintenance division of BHI is imminent, some facility radiological controls appear inadequate. For example, loose, unmarked sand bags and steel plate are being used as temporary shielding, and plastic mesh snow-fence is being used as a "control device" to prevent entry into High Radiation Areas.

cc: Board members