

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

August 14, 1998

**TO:** G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

**FROM:** P.F. Gubanc, Oak Ridge Site Representative

**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending August 14, 1998

Staff member Monique Helfrich and Outside Expert Bob Lewis were at Y-12 this week to observe the conclusion of the DOE review of Y-12 Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS) implementation. Staff members Massie and Thompson were in Oak Ridge this week to attend a U-233 storage standard and 97-1 Project Execution Plan workshop. I was on leave Thursday.

A. Y-12 ISMS Review: On August 14, the DOE verification team concluded its review of ISMS implementation at Y-12. Selected highlights from the team's outbrief are:

1. The Y-12 management and workforce appears to be well-versed and committed to the implementation of ISMS and its principles.
2. ISMS implementation in the Nuclear Operations division (i.e., the Y-12 pilot) is mature. Implementation in the Balance of Plant is at varying stages and will require continued management involvement and nurturing to be achieved. To complete this implementation by the planned October 1 date will be a major challenge.
3. The DOE Y-12 Site Office (YSO) was acknowledged as actively engaged and integral to the success of Y-12's ISMS. By contrast, the level of coordination, integration and support from DOE-Oak Ridge Operations (ORO) was identified as weak.
4. While the Y-12 hazard identification and control development process was identified as a strength, the mechanism which actually implements these controls was identified as lacking.
5. Consistency in applying ISMS across Y-12, especially with the Balance of Plant and non-LMES entities (e.g., Bechtel-Jacobs, LMER), was identified as a major challenge. Given that these other prime contractors are outside the jurisdiction of YSO, the lack of ORO involvement at Y-12 becomes even more of a concern.

A copy of the team's report will be provided electronically to the staff (Helfrich) next week.

B. DOE Chemical Vulnerabilities: On March 20, 1998, the Board sent DOE a letter citing examples of where DOE has not effectively "closed the circle" of ISM relative to feedback and improvement. One specific example was DOE's pursuit of chemical vulnerabilities across the complex. On August 12, I observed a DOE-wide video conference on this subject and concluded the following:

1. Strong leadership and a unifying vision is still not being provided by DOE Headquarters. A single definition of what constitutes a "chemical vulnerability" still does not exist.
2. The field is frustrated with being tasked to repeatedly develop reports and conduct assessments which do not manifest themselves into something useful coming back to the field.
3. Current DOE-HQ efforts do not appear focused on solving a crisply defined problem(s). Without this focus, these efforts are susceptible to becoming bloated and mis-directed.

I have passed along my observations to staff members Moury and Von Holle for their use.

cc: Board members