

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 7, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: M. T. Sautman

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending May 7, 1999

Building 779 Decommissioning. The last glovebox in B779 was size reduced this week. More than 130 gloveboxes have been disconnected, size reduced, and removed from the building.

Building 771 Deactivation. The first B771 deactivation management review (MR) began this week. The MR had two components: 1) review project readiness to disconnect and prepare certain gloveboxes and equipment that meet the Surface Contamination Objects (SCO) definition and 2) review the adequacy of certain key safety management programs that support D&D activities. (See April 16 report for a discussion of SCO). Tony Buhl is leading the MR team, which includes several members who participated in the B779 MR's. Several weaknesses have been identified with the waste management program. The glovebox removal demonstration was also delayed because the MR team identified that the RCT's and SOE were very unfamiliar with the work package. After they were briefed and given a walkdown, the first part of the demonstration was performed satisfactorily.

Initially it was thought that as many as 60 gloveboxes might meet SCO criteria and not require size reduction. However, workers could not decontaminate the first glovebox, which was anticipated to be easy, to meet low-level waste criteria (i.e., < 100 nCi/g). Additional decontamination had the unexpected result of significantly increasing surface contamination levels beyond detector capability.

Recommendation 94-1. The revised implementation plan states that Impure Salt from Cell Cleanout will be pyro-oxidized. This was due more to plutonium concentrations rather than any stability concerns. In order to meet their July milestone, K-H has tried to characterize this residue as low risk. Unlike every other residue category, K-H did not bother characterizing the drums and cans to a 95/5% confidence level. K-H only characterized the 219 cans to an 85/11% confidence level (sampled 16 vs. 52 cans). Their position is that the results are consistent with their model as well as other ER and MSE salts and that additional sampling is not necessary or cost effective. None of the data generated so far indicates any stability concerns. The technical staff also held a videoconference to discuss the gas generation testing process and plans for packaging acid-contaminated Ful-Flo filters.

Interactions with the Public. The Site Rep gave a quarterly update of Board activities to the RFETS Citizens Advisory Board. At the CAB's request, the presentation focused on the implementation status of Recommendation 94-1. The Site Rep also answered questions concerning the impacts of tornados to waste storage facilities as well as unaccounted for plutonium.

cc: Board members