

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 12, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
K. Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending November 12, 1999

Dave Grover was out of the office this week.

Adherence to Safety Controls. DOE-RFFO and RFETS contractor management have noted a trend of increasing problems with adherence to authorization basis (AB) safety controls during the last few months. This trend is evident at operating facilities as well as facilities undergoing deactivation including Buildings 371, 707, 776/777 and 991. Many of the problems have been inadequate identification of AB violations and/or incorrect interpretation of AB controls by Safe Sites of Colorado (SSOC) and Rocky Mountain Remediation Services (RMRS) personnel. Some examples include inadequate ventilation system alarm testing in Building 371 and failure to declare a Building 991 emergency generator “inoperable” after a failed operational test. Many of these violations were discovered by DOE-RFFO Facility Representatives. DOE-RFFO has formally requested that Kaiser-Hill determine the cause of the AB violations and report within 45 days on corrective actions taken by SSOC, RMRS and Kaiser-Hill to address the violations. (1-C)

Building 771 Deactivation. There have been several contamination incidents during the last two weeks in Building 771 during tap and drain and other clean-out evolutions. In one incident, a cap was inadvertently left off a pressure test port by a worker drilling a tap in a contaminated system. Upon seeing a fluid leak he replaced the cap and became contaminated on his leg. Decontamination of the worker required multiple attempts, and special monitoring of the worker for any internal dose will be required. The site rep. discussed these incidents with Building 771 management who concluded that remedial training for all Building 771 workers was required to emphasize the necessity for performing operations in a deliberate manner. This remedial training was conducted this week. (3-B)

Other Conduct of Operations Issues. Examples of other recent incidents include sign-off of a safety-related procedural torque check on a Pipe Overpack Container before the check was performed, violation of a posted criticality safety limit, and failure to measure the content of nuclear material in containers as required before transfer to another building.

Additional actions are under consideration by DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill to address concerns with the state of conduct of operations at RFETS. (1-C)

cc: Board Members