

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 24, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: R. F. Warther, M.T. Sautman

SUBJ: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending April 24, 1998

Offsite Consequence Calculations. A VTC to review differences in consequence calculation methodologies for emergency preparedness and nuclear safety analyses was conducted with personnel from the site and Board Staff. Consequence calculations following a postulated release are conservatively conducted using a Gaussian distribution model in safety analysis reports. The results are used to develop controls for facilities and activities. The Emergency Operations Center calculation model uses a puff model to provide a best estimate of the offsite consequences following a release. Although the puff model is expected to provide lower consequence values because it is designed to be a realistic model rather than a bounding model, some differences were not readily explained. The VTC resolved some of the differences, but another review is planned.

Entry into additional containers. The Site Reps entered into an additional cargo container and a trailer this week to complete an assessment initiated two weeks ago. The containers were not entered during the Staff trip two weeks ago because entry required a Radiological Work Permit and the previous permit had expired. No abnormal conditions were found in the trailer or cargo container. The trailer contained office equipment and the cargo container contained nine drums of low level waste material. The site reps have exhausted all potential sources for identifying hazardous materials in the cargo containers.

PuSPS. BNFL continued testing the packaging portion of the PuSPS system this week. Several new problems were encountered with the system, primarily with the control system. All problems were individually corrected, but the Site Reps have continuing concerns for the reliability of this system. Testing will continue for a couple more weeks.

Residue EIS. DOE is considering three options for the residue EIS that was scheduled to be signed around June. The options are: (1) issue the final EIS as soon as possible, (2) issue a final EIS and a split ROD, or (3) issue a second draft EIS and ROD. The reason for considering options (2) and (3) is because DOE-EH and DOE-GC do not believe that the option to package residues in the pipe component is enveloped by the no-action alternative in the draft EIS. The site's position is that packaging in a pipe component is bounded by the no-action alternative because the pipe is only viable if the characterization data shows the residues to be low hazard, and repackaging material into 55 gallon drums was part of the draft EIS no-action alternative. Issuing a second draft EIS would have these following effects in addition to other:

- Would delay salt shipments to WIPP
- Would delay B707 closure
- May preclude shipping SSC to SRS as a viable alternative. This could invalidate the SRS canyon optimization strategy.

The Site Reps will provide a point paper to the Board further detailing this issue in the event it is a topic at the Recommendation 94-1 Public Meeting.

cc: Board Members