

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 7, 1997

TO: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending September 7, 1997

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Activities:

1. **Resumption of Fissile Material Handling:** On September 4th, DOE-RL line management reversed its position and agreed that an independent DOE-RL Readiness Assessment (RA) would be reperformed for PFP Phase 1 fissile material handling. (The original DOE-RL RA was judged a failure and curtailed prior to completion.) The second DOE-RL RA will use the same lines of inquiry and team members as the original.
2. **“Show Cause” Letter:** In August 1997, the Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) Facility Evaluation Board assessed PFP operations. Due to PFP’s poor showing, especially in the areas of radiological controls and emergency preparedness, FDH issued a Show cause letter to the PFP operating contractor, B&W Hanford (BWHC). BWHC’s response was due September 4th. We will follow up with DOE-RL and FDH next week.
3. **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Inspection:** An IAEA inspection of plutonium storage at PFP is currently scheduled for the week of September 15th. If the visit cannot be rescheduled, a specific action plan with compensatory measures will need to be implemented to support fissile material handling for the inspection.

B. **Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Project:** A contractor Ared team composed of personnel from both FDH and Duke Engineering Services Hanford (DESH) conducted an independent review of the new SNF project schedule to validate the schedule slippage. DOE-RL also conducted their own review. Preliminary reports from these efforts indicate that it is unlikely additional efficiencies can be found to shorten the new 14 month slip in the current schedule. DOE and the contractors continue to work to delineate specific detailed explanations for the delays. This information is to be passed on to the Board staff when it is available.

C. **TWRS Safety Documentation:** Last year, TWRS initiated a major effort to replace and update the existing TWRS Interim Safety Basis (ISB), a collection of numerous individual analyses, with a consolidated Basis for Interim Operation (BIO). Over the last few months, DOE-RL has been conducting an extensive assessment to verify the contractor’s ability to quickly and reliably implement the BIO. This week, the DOE-RL assessment team leader expressed his goal and expectation that TWRS implementation of the BIO will occur by the end of September.

cc: Board Members