

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 25, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending April 25, 1997

A. DOE-RL Technical Qualification Program (TQP): The following statistics (current as of 3/31/97) provide the status of the DOE-RL TQP. Per DOE O 360.1, the majority of DOE staff are to complete qualification under the TQP by May 31, 1998.

Total DOE-RL Staff	540
DOE-RL Staff Classified as "Technical"	330 (61% of total staff)
DOE-RL Staff Enrolled in the TQP	296 (90% of technical staff)
Total Number of Competencies Requiring Completion	24668
Total Number of Competencies Completed	20546 (83% of total)
DOE-RL Staff who have Completed Qualification	29 (10% of TQP enrollees)

It is important to note that the quality and rigor of these qualifications have not yet received a comprehensive review by the DNFSB staff.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Project: On April 22, Mr. Ogg toured the Canister Storage Building (CSB) construction site with the DOE-RL CSB construction manager. Mowat, the constructor, is erecting superstructure for CSB support facilities and continues preparation work for the main building superstructure. Actual erection of structural steel for the main building will likely begin in early May.

On April 24, the Director of the SNF project for DOE-RL tentatively approved construction of the Cold Vacuum Drying (CVD) facility pending final review by the DOE Independent Review Panel (IRP). The IRP is expected to concur by Monday, April 28, and construction is expected to start immediately thereafter.

C. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Restart Preparation: On April 17, Babcock and Wilcox Hanford Co. (BWHC) started Phase 1 of their Readiness Assessment (RA) for resumption of fissile material handling at PFP. BWHC plans to conduct the RA in three phases corresponding to three groups of PFP divisions (PFP Operations, Transition Operations, Engineering, etc.). Concurrently, BWHC is revising portions of the RA plan to address concerns expressed by DOE-RL that the RA lacks appropriate focus on PFP management activity and involvement. The curtailment of operations involving fissile material handling at PFP has been in effect since December 24, 1996. DOE-RL expects that BWHC will complete Phase 1 of the RA next week and that the DOE independent RA will begin at that time. The site representatives plan to observe the DOE independent RA.

D. Local Press Coverage: On April 14, the Board forwarded, to DOE, our report concerning configuration management problems at Hanford. On April 25, the Tri-City Herald (the local newspaper) featured this report in a front page article. At least one local radio station has also picked up this story. A copy of the article was faxed to Chairman Conway and senior DNFSB- HQ staff.

cc:

Board Members