

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 31, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending January 31, 1997

A. Employee Integrity Violations: Two weeks ago, we reported about a PFP operator who in December 1996, deliberately violated radiological procedure. This week, we learned of a Tank Farm cognizant engineer who in October 1996, forged a "release stamp" on an Engineering Change Notice to expedite a Quality Assurance review and material purchase. These two events have the following similarities:

1. Both events were discovered by the contractors' own internal systems. Corrective actions were taken to assure that the safety of the involved personnel and systems were not compromised.
2. The individuals involved received disciplinary action but were not terminated.
3. Contractor middle management did not immediately inform senior management of the events or consult them prior to dispensing disciplinary action. Senior management is taking corrective action in this regard.

We have discussed both of the above events with senior DOE-RL and contractor management and believe that they will appreciate both the severity and the implications of these events.

B. Funding of DNFSB 93-5 Commitments: As previously committed by DOE-RL, the 93-5 (Tank Characterization) implementation plan commitments are being funded for FY97. Based on discussions with DOE-RL, Fluor Daniel (FDH) and Lockheed Martin (LMHC), we have the following additional information:

1. All four Characterization Crews are Functioning in the Field: The existing labor contract permits more senior workers to "bump out" junior workers even though they may not hold the same types of qualifications. While several characterization operators were bumped, LMHC has been able to make adjustments and keep all four sampling crews functioning in the field.

2. FDH 93-5 Funding Solution Not Yet Formally Communicated to DOE-RL: LMHC formally issued its 93-5 funding solution to FDH on January 21, 1997. FDH has not yet formally identified its 93-5 funding solution to DOE-RL for approval. Until this is approved by DOE-RL, the implications of what other tank farms work might be impacted are not certain.

C. WESF Exhaust Filter Flooding: As discussed last week, the WESF K-3 exhaust HEPA filter boxes sit in below ground vaults and were recently exposed to standing water (probably due to snow melt). Preparations are still underway to confirm whether water has actually contacted the HEPA filters themselves. The east bank is isolated, however, due to evidence that it may be wetted. Plant forces have also taken action to seal and dike the vaults to prevent recurrence. The effectiveness of these measures will be known early next week since heavy rains fell January 31.

D. N-Basin Monolith Recovery: Bechtel (BHI) is proceeding with recovery plans for retrieving the #10 monolith that was dropped on the N-Basin floor. BHI plans to perform a mock-up lift using an outdoor crane and an unused monolith weighted with sand. The temporary rigging attachment includes four plate clamps that will grip the ½" wall of the monolith in four locations around its circumference. Workers assisting the crane operator will be stationed atop scaffolding to simulate working from the N-basin deck. Mr. Ogg plans to observe the mock-up lift next Tuesday.

DOE-RL assembled a surveillance team last week to look into the cause of the original drop and to evaluate the condition of the basin crane. Consultants hired by DOE plan to use computer modeling to assist in the evaluation.

cc:

Board Members