

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 31, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: R.F. Warther, M.T. Sautman
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending January 31, 1997

Recommendation 94-3 Joel Blackman, Farid Bamdad and Roy Kasdorf were on site this week to review Recommendation 94-3 progress as well as initiate a review of the B371 Basis for Interim Operation. A detailed trip report will be provided to the Board. Some issues include:

- The 94-3 IPP likely will be revised because some milestones have been missed and because some plans at RFETS have either changed, or are in the process of changing.
- The Technical Safety Requirements contained in the draft version of the BIO reviewed by the staff do not meet the intent of Recommendations 94-3 and 95-2. RFFO independently provided preliminary indication that they will not approve the BIO as currently written. Specific concerns and examples of problematic TSRs will be included in the staff's trip report.
- Based on the RFFO and K-H response to staff questions, it is not clear if the BIO will be upgraded to a SAR or SAR-like document per the IPP. The primary justification is that the site is still considering shipment of material to SRS, and still funding design of the ISV.
- K-H has replaced virtually all personnel previously associated with this project. The primary reason was because RFFO and K-H recognized in October 1996 that the project was behind schedule. However, the staff is concerned that some of the work done in late 1995 and early 1996 may not be fully understood by all parties.

K-H Reorganization As discussed with the Board Members previously, K-H officially announced its reorganization including the abolition of the K-H engineering group. Engineering (Vik Mani), ES&H (David Waite) and Performance Assessments (Tony Buhl) will be combined into one K-H organization called ES&H assessments. Wynn Harding, a retired submarine officer will become VP for this division and Mark Spears will become the Deputy. The engineering function will be pushed down to the subcontractors. Other divisions remain unchanged. An organizational chart is attached. This organization was developed by the Site Reps, and is not the official K-H organizational chart. That will be provided to the Board and staff when it is available.

Recommendation 94-1 and SNM Shipments: Now that the Record of Decision has been issued, RFETS can start shipping pits to Pantex. K-H plans to maximize pit shipments between February and mid-April because the FL shipping container's certification expires on April 15. Every FL container must be recertified to a more stringent leak-test standard (10-7 cc/sec vs. 10-5 cc/sec). Retesting every container could affect the rate of future shipments because of limited facilities for retesting (e.g., SNL, LLNL, maybe Pantex, and the local firm that originally built the FL containers).

DOE-MD will develop another EIS to address where plutonium will be vitrified or manufactured into mixed-oxide fuel. This EIS should also examine the interim storage of RFETS's plutonium metal and oxide at SRS until the Actinide Processing and Storage Facility (APSF) is ready. This would allow plutonium metal and oxide to be shipped from RFETS as fast as it is processed in the B707 Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System. Another option also being considered is sending Pu-Enriched Uranium and Pu-Np mixtures and some lean Pu oxides to SRS for stabilization. This could reduce the amount of oxide needing stabilization at RFETS by approximately one-third.

Recommendation 93-3 The Site Reps attended a Shift Manager Requalification Board. Several points should be noted:

- The Requal Board members consisted of the Building Manager, the Building Operations Manager and one other senior building member. The Requal Board was run well with good questions. However, many of the answers were weak, and the candidate did not demonstrate a superior level of building knowledge. The candidate passed the requal Board with several lookups. The candidate had failed his first requal Board several weeks earlier, and apparently the requal Board members believed his performance on this Board was significantly improved.
- RFFO Facility Reps have started attending building qualification Boards (e.g., Shift Managers, Shift Technical Advisors). The Site Reps believe that the DOE Facility Rep qualification process and oral boards have improved to the point where FR qualification is more rigorous than the building qualification as a Shift Manger. The FRS recognize this and are attempting to raise the standard for building qualification.
- SSOC sends a senior individual to all qualification Boards. Based on his observation of the requal Board, he indicated he will make several changes, including initiating on-watch semi nars and ensuring the rigor of qualification Boards increases.

The Site Reps received an update to the qualification progress for RFFO personnel under Recommendation 93-3. The results are summarized in the figure. Total qualification progress continues to be slow. RFFO is assigned about 300 people. Of these 300, 147 are in the technical qualification program. Twenty two of the 147 are FRS. Of the remaining 125, only two are fully qualified.



cc: Board Members

