

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 15, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJ: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending August 15, 1997

The Site Reps were in Washington D.C. from Wednesday through Friday to discuss the pipe overpack component's adequacy for residue risk reduction.

Recommendation 94-1. After a series of false starts, functional acceptance testing of BNFL's portion of the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System began. However, testing was terminated after only one test was completed. For the next week, technicians will be checking all the electrical equipment since several items were damaged during shipment.

The Readiness Assessment for draining the high-level solution tanks in B771 and transferring the solutions to B371 continued this week. Many of the issues identified so far deal with radiation protection: lack of job-specific training for RCTs, poor survey practices, not implementing the dosimetry required by the Activity Control Envelope, operator practices, and housekeeping.

Preparations for salt oxidation have had mixed success. Despite meeting with the vendors and examining the failed heating elements, the cause for the repeated failures of furnace heating elements has not been determined. Additional lab inspections and controller testing are planned. K-H is taking a more active role in managing this project and is trying to optimize operator training by shifting many of the construction activities to second shift or the weekend.

Requalification Board. The Site Reps observed the requalification board of a Shift Manager (SM). The SM failed primarily due to his inadequate response during casualties in which he did not take firm charge of the situation nor fully use his support staff. The Site Reps agreed with this decision although they were a little surprised the SM failed since this building usually has a lower standard for passing and since this individual had been a SM for seven years.

Recommendation 94-3 The Site Reps toured B371 with the upgrades project manager to determine the status of implementing building upgrades to B371. Over half the fire main seismic supports have been installed. Engineering may have to resolve some issues, but this portion of the job generally is on schedule. All but one of the fire doors have been installed. K-H's request for exemptions to portions of the life safety code remains with RFFO. K-H's efforts to upgrade egress routes are largely complete and will be fully complete by September 30. RFFO expects to approve the BIO within the next couple of weeks. The Implementation Plan and Authorization Agreement for the BIO will be completed around September 1. K-H has not completed its estimate for implementing the BIO, but preliminary estimates are between three and four million dollars and under one year to implement. The Board staff will review the BIO and implementation issues in detail the first week of September.

cc: Board Members