

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 1, 2013

TO: S. A. Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending February 1, 2013

Tank Farms. Following feedback from senior Office of River Protection (ORP) managers, the contractor did not declare that they had completed implementation of the safety basis revision that begins the restoration of the double-shell tank ventilation systems to safety significant (see Activity Report 1/25/2013). The contractor anticipates completing the required flow measurements later this month. As a dry-run, workers were directed to act as if the Technical Safety Requirements and draft procedure changes associated with the upcoming safety basis change are in effect.

The contractor's Plant Review Committee (PRC) approved a Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) to allow continued retrieval from single-shell tanks into double-shell tanks with deep sludge layers (see Activity Report 1/18/2013). The JCO would allow sludge levels in receipt tanks beyond the current administrative limit of 170" (see Activity Report 12/7/2012). It also includes requirements for monitoring the behavior of the deep sludge layers and developing a recovery plan should this behavior indicate unexpected flammable gas retention. Since the sludge depth limits in the proposed JCO are not sufficient to retrieve all of the waste from C-farm into the planned receipt tanks, the contractor began exploring alternative retrieval strategies.

The site reps reminded a senior ORP manager that the Board's staff still has a related concern regarding the adequacy of the existing methodology for waste group categorization, i.e. the evaluation for releasing significant quantities of flammable gas from solids in tanks (see Activity Report 10/26/12).

618-10 Burial Ground. The contractor re-evaluated the data from various drums they retrieved from burial trenches and concluded that no single drum exceeded the limit for a hazard category-3 facility (see Activity Report 11/30/12). Non-destructive assay experts developed what they believe is a more realistic model of the contents in the drums. The model and results are being reviewed by an outside expert. The radionuclide contents of some of the drums were higher than that evaluated in the Final Hazard Categorization of the Burial Ground so the contractor has reburied these drums. The contractor has suggested to Richland Operations Office that any future drums with high concentrations of radionuclides be reburied, and these reburied drums will be processed under the future Documented Safety Analysis for retrieving waste from the Vertical Pipe Units in 618-10.

Waste Treatment Plant. The contractor resubmitted a request to ORP for approval of long-lead procurements for the Low Activity Waste facility's offgas system because the equipment is different from what is described in the approved safety basis. ORP had previously told the contractor that ORP approval is not required to procure this equipment because the safety function has not changed. This procurement is for the safety-significant HEPA filter preheaters.

Office of River Protection. W. Hamel started as the Federal Project Director for the Waste Treatment Plant.