

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 12, 2007

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: R. Todd Davis/Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending October 12, 2007

A. Oxide Conversion Facility Restart. As reported on September 7th, YSO approved a BWXT proposal that a contractor Readiness Assessment (RA) be performed to confirm readiness for restart of the Oxide Conversion Facility (OCF) following a 1-year shutdown. YSO did not consider that contractor and DOE Operational Readiness Reviews were required given YSO's contractual, supplemental guidance to DOE Order 425.1, *Startup and Restart of Nuclear Facilities*. This supplemental guidance provides a definition of "nuclear facility" as a building or structure as covered by an Authorization Agreement versus "...activities or operations..." as stated in DOE Order 425.1. Following discussions with NNSA Headquarters last week regarding this action, YSO now intends to perform a YSO RA for OCF restart in addition to the planned contractor RA. OCF restart is now projected in late-November.

B. Uranium Holdup Survey Program. As noted on September 21st, the site reps. inquired on the significant delay in implementing the Inadvertent Accumulation Prevention Program (IAPP) in response to uranium holdup issues associated with a vacuum pump filter in 2006. This week, BWXT briefed YSO personnel on plans to resume progress on the IAPP. A project manager has been assigned to coordinate and track completion of the systematic reviews of fissile material activities to implement the IAPP. In addition, several engineers have been assigned to this effort to reduce the prior burden placed on Criticality Safety Officers (CSOs) in leading and documenting the reviews. This effort is now expected to be completed by February 2008.

During the briefing, BWXT noted that a Standing Order has been issued that allows a 6-month extension for annual CSO walkdowns/reviews of fissile material activities to allow the CSOs to focus on IAPP reviews. The site reps. and staff have inquired on whether extension of the CSO annual walkdowns/reviews is consistent with the applicable ANSI/ANS standard.

C. Bulging Drum - Update. BWXT continues to develop procedures for venting the bulging waste drum discussed in last week's report. The exact cause of the pressurization is unknown, but the potential for a flammable atmosphere in the drum exists. In response to site rep. inquiry last week, BWXT plans to include a pre-staged fire response capability (fire watch) to respond to the most likely fire scenarios upon venting. The venting activity is expected to occur next week.

D. Personnel Contamination Events - Update. As reported on August 17th, BWXT management had chartered an independent investigation of personnel contamination events in the Enriched Uranium Operations Building. The two events involved: (1) contaminated liquid spraying out of a valve (upon starting a pump) that had been used to drain a machining chip cleaning system; and (2) a solution spill while handling a safe bottle during a pour-up activity. The BWXT investigation report was issued in late-September identifying contributing factors and recommendations. Among the recommendations are: revision of building procedures for controlling valve alignments and for returning systems to service; modification of the Y-12 lock-out/tag-out process to explicitly identify and control any draining or other test points; and development of ergonomic improvements to safe bottles and pour-up stations. Corrective actions are being determined.