

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 26, 2006

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: R. Todd Davis/Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for the Week Ending May 26, 2006

Mr. Owen was out of the office Wednesday to Friday this week.

A. Vacuum Pump Filter - Criticality Safety. This week, YSO completed a Safety Evaluation Report approving field remediation activities consistent with the BWXT proposed Justification for Continued Operation (JCO). The JCO and supporting criticality safety documents provided the contractor technical basis for removing the drain valve and probing the filter housing to ensure no significant moderator (e.g., oil) remains. Following staff inquiry (see last week's report), BWXT developed controls for this activity that included a restriction of only one person within the 15-foot boundary and no personnel closer than 2 feet to the filter housing. BWXT developed a one-time use procedure to complete this activity and an Implementation Validation Review was performed to ensure safety basis controls were adequately implemented.

On Thursday, BWXT personnel successfully completed this procedure. Only a small amount of additional oil was noted when the filter housing was probed. After the probing and area clean-up was completed, Non-Destructive Assay (NDA) personnel performed surveys of the filter housing to compare against previous NDA results. Criticality safety personnel will evaluate these results and other information to provide a technical basis to support cleaning the filter housing and replacing the filter. Other activities (e.g., separation of the East and West vacuum headers and clean out of other filter housings) are on-going to support resumption of casting operations.

As noted on May 12th, a BWXT investigation team is evaluating this issue and the broader implementation of the Uranium Holdup Survey Program at Y-12. This effort is on-going with causal analysis expected to begin next week.

B. YSO Technical Qualification Program. This week, the first Technical Qualification Program (TQP) accreditation review in the complex was completed for the Y-12 Site Office program. The review team concluded that the TQP systems and programs are in place and that YSO had an exceptionally well-qualified workforce. The team recommends accreditation of the YSO processes with 6 areas identified for future improvement.

C. Enriched Uranium Operations. As noted on February 17th, equipment and safety basis issues have precluded wet chemistry activities from achieving an operational tempo. Currently, secondary extraction operations have been suspended since December 2005 because of an Unreviewed Safety Question (see 3/24/06 site rep. report). On Wednesday, YSO communicated concerns to BWXT regarding the limited production output and the need to reduce the amount of backlogged/stored material. YSO requested BWXT to "identify the underlying causes that are preventing sustainable manufacturing operations, both capability and capacity...." YSO requested that this review include all enriched uranium operations.