

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 12, 1998

**TO:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

**SUBJ:** RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending June 12, 1998

**Partial EOC Activation.** The EOC was partially activated on June 9. The site declared an alert due to a spill outside B374. A tank used for acid waste processing in years past overflowed, and about two to three gallons spilled. The area was bermed and no spread of liquid resulted. The liquid was assumed to be phosphoric acid from B444 operations. The IDLH value for  $H_2PO_4$  is  $1000\text{ mg/m}^3$  and the TLV is  $1\text{ mg/m}^3$ . The estimated peak concentration using a 1N concentration of acid without a berm was  $4\text{ mg/m}^3$ . No radioactive contamination was detected in the area around the spill, and no effects to public or worker health and safety were evident. Although manning the EOC probably was not required, it was a conservative action that resulted in bringing additional resources for the initially unknown spill. The site sheltered within 10 minutes, and within 15 minutes EOC personnel determined that no radiological risks existed. The spill occurred because an outdoor drain overflowed. The drain was connected to a tank that had a high level alarm locked in for several years. Although precipitation caused the tank to overflow, had the alarm been cleared earlier, the precipitation would have caused a high level alarm and building personnel could have taken preventive action. The Site Reps intend to follow this up by determining how many lock-in alarms remain on plant site and what actions are being taken to clear them.

**Pits Shipments to Pantex.** The Pantex site reps reported that pit shipments from RFETS to Pantex will be delayed. The reason for the delay is Pantex workers will require overtime to meet the current schedule, and a decision has been made to not allocate overtime funds for this project. This will not significantly affect RFETS risk reduction activities. The RFETs and Pantex Site Reps also discussed pit leak testing. RFETS has obtained a statistically significant set of results pit leak test results that are significantly below the action level. Pit leak tests at Pantex were discussed with the Pantex Site Reps, who reported on those issues to the Board Staff and Technical Director.

**B886 Deactivation.** K-H completed its review of B886 prior to continued deactivation of that facility. Three prestart findings were noted: (1) one worker had not completed his criticality qualifications; (2) Rad Work Permits (RWPs) and the ALARA review were incomplete for the activities scheduled, and in one case, the ALARA review placed unnecessary restrictions on the workers; and (3) the workers' knowledge regarding hazards analyses was weak. Several post start findings were also noted, including: (1) the operations order must be revised to ensure an adequate set of controls remains in place when the door for Room 101 is open; (2) pre-evolutionary briefs should be strengthened; and (3) some weaknesses in worker knowledge were noted (aside from the pre-start hazards assessment level of knowledge).

**B771 restart.** RFFO gave personnel in B771 permission to resume operations on June 11. Personnel in the facility completed walkdowns in preparation for tap and drain operations that will resume during the week of 6/15. Operations were not conducted on Friday because it was an AWS day. B771 personnel have continued with the benelex removal work preparations for deactivating and removing piping systems.

**Be Assessment.** The local EH residents conducted an assessment of Be during February and March. The report contains four findings: (1) The K-H Be program is not formal and adequately documented; (2) Be protection programs are not uniformly implemented across the site; (3) RFFO does not have a CBD Prevention Program for Federal employees; and (4) RFFO is not performing adequate oversight of its contractor's Be protection programs. The EH reviewers gave high marks to the B779 Be program, reflecting B779's efforts to add controls following the Management Review. The Site Reps are in general agreement with these findings.

cc: Board Members