

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 19, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJ: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending June 19, 1998

Recommendation 94-1. Several Recommendation 94-1 activities resumed this week after residue plutonium assay and building authorization basis shutdowns were resolved. Salt pyro-oxidation, SS&C and B776 LECO crucible repack, and sampling in B776 resumed. Sampling activities in B371 and B707 are still terminated because of uncertainties with assays. Management reviews for repacking dry residues in B707 Module D and LECO crucibles in Module K are scheduled to occur in the upcoming week.

The B371 CWTS has completed processing the B771 high concentration tank solutions and the B371 tank 292A solution. The only plutonium solutions remaining are holdup solutions and some miscellaneous bottles. There are currently 13 bottles containing high-level plutonium solutions in B771 and B776. This week the solutions were transferred into new bottles. In addition, any bottle that contained more than 3.75 liters or 200 g of actinides had its solution divided into two bottles. These bottles are to be transferred to B371 next week. Once this is completed, purging and draining of the oxalic acid system will begin. The Readiness Assessment for the remaining tap and drain systems in B771 is scheduled for late July. The Management Review for B371 Tap and Drain began Friday. The success of fogging (see below) is good news since room decontamination was critical path for draining activities in B371.

Room Decontamination. Last week, fogging began in room 3559 in B371 in order to reduce airborne contamination levels and fix loose surface contamination. Earlier reports that the DAC levels were reduced from 200,000 to 0 are suspect because the filter paper size used afterwards may have allowed unfiltered air to be sucked around the sides of the paper. A phosphorescent dye was added to the aerosol to aid in the detection of contamination since the aerosol has the potential to mask α particles. However, the heat from the aerosol generator transducers may have caused the dye to settle out before it was sprayed into the room. A different dye will be added to the aerosol and the room refogged next week.

Recommendation 95-2. The Site Reps reviewed three activity screening forms using the new activity screening process. This process is used to determine the appropriate level of planning and analysis required for the activity. The form contains a prescreen that allows one to bypass the process if the activity had previously been performed and analyzed, and entailed no changes to the hazards and controls. The prescreen for size reducing plutonium metal items claimed that no further analysis was required since this activity was performed in the 1980s. The Site Reps believe that the prescreen needs a caveat that it only applies to activities previously performed with an upgraded hazard analyses and control identification process (e.g., post-resumption or ISMS) to ensure that current standards are met. The Nuclear Safety Manager agreed with the Site Reps that this was the intent and that evidently their training did not sufficiently clarify this issue. He is taking action to correct this situation and prevent its recurrence. The Site Reps will continue to oversee the implementation of the activity screening process.

The Site Reps completed their review of the draft B776/777 Preliminary Hazards Analysis and Basis for Interim Operations. Although several minor issues were identified, the quality of these draft documents was much better than draft authorization bases prepared for other RFETS facilities in the last 2 years. The B776/777 draft documents incorporated many of the improvements that resulted from cross table reviews of past documents.

SOE Path Forward Plan. During Secretary of Energy Peña's visit to RFETS on June 5, he promised a Closure Project Plan to submit to the President. A draft Rocky Flats Closure Management Plan was issued this week. The plan assigns the Deputy Secretary of Energy as the *Senior Governmental Officer* and contains four strategic initiatives: (1) accelerate shipments from RFETS, (2) minimize construction at the site, (3) organize for closure and (4) execute an accelerated closure business strategy. Details of these initiatives, including supporting commitments for each initiative are included in the plan. The plan will be submitted to the White House and Congress prior to the SOE's departure from office.

c: Board Members