

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 26, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: R. F. Warther, M.T. Sautman
SUBJ: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending June 26, 1998

Training and Qualification. The Site Reps observed some RCT oral qualification boards and found that the rigor of the qualification board was marginal. The Site Reps were concerned that SSOC management was not significantly involved in the oral board qualification process for RCTs. Based on DOE Fac Rep and building Shift Manager qualification lessons learned, a lack of senior management involvement often results in marginal or inadequate qualification boards. Following discussions with the Site Reps, the K-H Rad Con manager determined that the RCT Board member composition did not include a sufficient number of managers or Rad Con engineering representatives and he would address this issue. The Site Reps will continue to attend RCT qualification boards.

WIPP/EPA Audit. EPA and WIPP personnel were on site to inspect and audit TRU operations at RFETS. No findings were noted. The EPA will write and issue its final report over the next several weeks, and once issued, RFETS will be ready to ship TRU waste to WIPP.

Recommendation 94-3. SSOC completed its Phase III review of the B371 BIO implementation on Thursday. This review contained three prestart findings: (1) AB training of key personnel in the facility remains poor; (2) criticality safety Management Assessment Program cards are not adequate; and (3) the process for configuration control between the BIO/TSRs and other building procedural documents (e.g., SERs, AC Program Manual, surveillance procedures) is very weak. These issues will be closed out by July 9. This is an important milestone because it represents the implementation of a significant portion of the improved measures and controls that resulted from Rec 94-3. The details of implementing the balance of Recommendation 94-3 will be reviewed next week.

Recommendation 94-1. The B371 Tap and Drain Management Review (MR) was completed this week. The SSOC team had 7 pre-start and 5 post-start findings. The findings addressed weaknesses with the solution sampling process, incorporation of ACE controls into the procedures, the criticality evaluation, and SM/STA knowledge of the activity. The K-H team overseeing the MR identified additional pre-start findings related to hydrogen controls and process knowledge that were not explicitly included in the SSOC findings. The Site Reps observed the MR and found the combination of a SSOC review with extensive K-H and RFFO oversight to be adequate.

This week, the remaining bottles of high level plutonium solution (not from tank draining) were transferred from B771 and B776 to B371 for CWTS processing. This will support meeting the 94-1 milestone to complete processing of liquids from B771 high level tanks and bottles by the end of July. Although B771 resumed operations 2 weeks ago, purging and draining of the oxalic acid system has not begun. The Site Reps are very concerned with this project since no draining has occurred for nearly the last 5 months and management has not gained control of their schedule.

K-H should begin 16 weeks of testing on the packaging portion of the PuSPS in August. Draft schedules show that startup of 5 manual furnaces and the packaging system in B371 will occur in March 2000. K-H believes that this will still support the May 2002 milestone, but this has not been validated by the Site Reps. K-H is exploring the possibility of buying a bagless transfer system from SRS or sending the PuSPS to Hanford.