

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 15, 2001

**TO:** J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** R. E. Kasdorf, Acting RFETS Site Representative  
**SUBJECT:** RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending March 16, 2001

**Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS).** The staff reviewed readiness preparations for startup of the PuSPS with the line management review team charter to certify readiness. There is still much work to be done before startup involving both paper issues and equipment issues. The Job Hazards Analysis is still being revised due to changes in documents (ALARA review, criticality safety review and fire hazards analysis) which input into the JHA. In turn, this impacts finalizing the operating procedures. Procedure preparations have also been impacted by a recent material control occurrence in Building 371, which led to a complete review of all material handling procedures and added material accountability and control steps. To date, the operations team has not conducted dry runs with a finalized set of procedures. The project has not yet removed several blanks to tie portions of the glovebox into the building ventilation system due to not having a validated authorization basis for the system. The blanks isolate portions of the system protecting over-pressure conditions (e.g., down stream from a dump valve) and do not effect the normal operation of the PuSPS. The staff suggested that the blanks be removed as part of the startup plan following the Operation Readiness Review and verification of the authorization basis. The project is experiencing air leakage into the cap insertion glovebox. This glovebox is inerted with helium and maintained at less than 5% oxygen. The air leakage has caused an excessive helium usage. The site is currently trying to locate the leak but this effort is detracting from other needed preparations. The project appears to be aggressively working on the issues, but a declaration of readiness by Building 371 is not likely to occur until early April 2001.

The DOE Plan of Action (POA) for their ORR has still not been issued by DOE-RFFO (see Feb. 9, 2001 site rep report). The site rep. held a detailed discussion with DOE-RFFO concerning proper definition of prerequisites applicable to DOE-RFFO oversight of PuSPS. The POA is being revised and should be issued next week. (3-A)

**DOE Headquarters Independent Oversight Review.** A team of personnel from the independent oversight group within the DOE Office of Environment, Safety and Health, EH-2, completed field work this week for a review on safety management implementation. The team did not find any immediate safety issues but considered the recent events and near misses as serious, and in need of management attention. Many of the recent problems involve the control of work. The team found that site-wide work control requirements are, at times, being circumvented by use of less formal procedures (e.g., operations procedure). There was some concern that appropriate work controls were not being specified for more routine work that would be accomplished outside of the site's Integrated Work Control Program. The EH-2 team also noted that feedback and improvement is not working efficiently at the contractor or at the field office. A draft report is expected in two weeks. (1-C)

cc:

Board Members