

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

October 17, 1997

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

**FROM:** P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives

**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending October 17, 1997

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP):

**1. PFP Recovery Plan:** In the absence of a clear recovery plan, the contractors and DOE-RL continued to miscommunicate this week on the path forward. On October 17, at a DOE-RL, Fluor Daniel (FDH), and B&W Hanford (BWHC) meeting, this problem was recognized by all parties. BWHC was tasked to provide a "matrix" of their intended actions by October 20.

**2. FDH Verification of Readiness:** Two weeks ago, FDH started providing independent oversight in parallel with BWHC's preparations. This week, DOE-RL asked for FDH's formal plan for this oversight. FDH's plan is expected to be available October 20.

**3. Communication Foci:** Given DOE and the contractors' resistance to formality and the resulting confusion to date, DOE-RL, FDH and BWHC adopted Mr. Gubanc's suggestion to each identify a single point of contact through whom all PFP resumption activities and expectations would be communicated. One goal is that these "gatekeepers" can keep efforts clearly focused on resuming fissile material handling.

BWHC's earliest declaration of readiness is now October 24 although we consider it doubtful.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Project: Overdue procurement approvals for the Cold Vacuum Drying sub-project and the Integrated Water Treatment System sub-project continue to cause near term delays in the SNF Project schedule. Through senior management meetings and critical path management meetings, the contractor and DOE-RL continue to work to improve their coordination so that similar delays can be avoided in the future.

C. Site Corrective Actions from PFP Explosion: In response to numerous deficiencies identified after the May 14 explosion (e.g., emergency response, chemical vulnerability), FDH assembled a comprehensive site corrective action team in July. On October 16, Mr. Gubanc attended the FDH team's weekly meeting. It quickly became apparent that the team's efforts are not well coordinated, integrated or communicated. As a result, subtasks are optimized without considering their impact on the whole, action need dates are not clearly identified, and accountability is difficult to exercise. These observations were shared with DOE-RL and FDH senior management.

D. 233-S D&D: On October 14, Mr. Ogg toured the 233-S facility with the cognizant DOE-RL Facility Representative and the Bechtel Hanford, Inc. (BHI) Field Superintendent. BHI started D&D field work in the non-process pipe gallery the first week of October, following partial approval of the 233-S authorization basis by DOE-RL (work inside the 233-S process hood is not approved at this time). Of note in the 233-S authorization basis is the inclusion of formal TSRs.

cc: Board members