

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 13, 1998

TO: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending February 13, 1998

Ralph Arcaro, Dave Grover, Herb Massie and Larry Zull were on site this week to review TWRS construction projects. Dan Ogg was on military leave all week.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): After some last minute uncertainty introduced by DOE-HQ, the DOE-RL Readiness Assessment (RA) for PFP "Phase 1" fissile material handling started on February 13. Mr. Gubanc attended the "kickoff meeting". Tim Hunt and Outside Expert Dave Boyd are scheduled to observe the RA and review PFP criticality safety next week.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) provided conditional approval of the Duke Engineering & Services, Hanford (DESH) corrective action plan on February 6, 1998. The related documentation was provided to the DNFSB Staff (Don Wille) on February 10. FDH's conditions are significant and many demand DESH responses by the end of the month.

C. Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS):

1. Lockheed Martin (LMHC) President Lincoln Hall changed jobs this week to head up the LMAES team bidding on TWRS Privatization. Fran DeLozier is acting President, LMHC.
2. LMHC declared an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) regarding level growth in tank 101-SY. Mixer pump operations will continue albeit with more waste data reviews and controls.
3. DNFSB staff review identified several concerns with the timing and findings of the DOE-RL Operational Readiness Review (ORR) of a new tank ventilation system (702-AZ). Ralph Arcaro and Paul Gubanc will provide additional details to the Board next week.
4. In discussing TWRS readiness to proceed with privatization, LMHC continues to show examples of a rigorous systems engineering approach. Ralph Arcaro has details.
5. TWRS Project W-464 will modify and complete portions of the SNFP Canister Storage Building (CSB) to store vitrified high level waste. TWRS and SNFP staff have only recently initiated regular discussions to identify interface issues. Resolving these issues will be more difficult after the Phase 1B privatization contract is awarded (June). Dave Grover has details.

D. N-Basin Fuel: The N-Basin is currently classified as a "radiological facility" based on analyses which assume up to 204 lbs of fuel fragments in the basin. By January 1998, 171 lbs of fuel, including intact fuel elements, had been discovered in N-Basin and shipped to the 327 Facility. Since then, Bechtel Hanford, Inc. (BHI) has confirmed an additional 41 lbs in the basin. Per a February 11 occurrence report, issued at the direction of the DOE-RL Facility Representative, BHI has justified a 325 lb fuel limit using the USQ process. Given past irregularities in BHI safety analysis practices (so as to avoid "nuclear" classification), additional inquiries are merited.

cc: Board members