

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 1, 1998

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

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

**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending May 1, 1998

Mr. Gubanc was on travel all week.

A. New Work Schedule: On May 1, Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) and its major subcontractors had their first Friday off as part of the new "8 - 9s" work schedule where, in the course of a two week period, contractor personnel work eight nine-hour days, one eight-hour day and have one day off. However, the bargaining unit personnel (operators, radcon techs, maintenance, etc.) chose not to participate in the new work schedule, and are still working regular eight-hour days. Therefore, FDH and its major subs have had to direct a limited number of supervisory and management personnel to work on the "off" Friday to support the bargaining unit workers. Engineering and technical support personnel are "on-call" in case their assistance is needed.

The site representatives are inquiring into the efficiency of the work-force under this arrangement and question the wisdom of the decision to proceed in this manner. The likelihood of inefficiency is particularly disturbing in light of the limited budget at Hanford and the anticipated funding shortfall for regulatory compliance and for commitments to the DNFSB.

B. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): DOE-RL approved restart of fissile material handling in portions of the PFP on April 20, and since then much of the planned work has proceeded as scheduled. However, in response to a Pu uptake event several weeks ago, Babcock and Wilcox Hanford Company (BWHC) has put some of the work on hold pending radiological controls reviews of suspect work procedures. We are looking into the scope and duration of these reviews to understand the delay in work activities.

C. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): In response to our questions concerning work experience requirements for fuel handlers, Duke Engineering & Services Hanford (DESH) and DOE-RL reported that the new labor contract (concurrent with the PHMC) does not require fuel handlers to be journeymen. A fuel handler is required to complete initial qualifications within 6 months, and then may complete additional qualifications over the subsequent 6 months. This timing is factored into the planning for the start of fuel removal operations.

DESH had expected to submit, to FDH this week, a root cause analysis of problems within the project and responses to Board staff questions concerning ASME Code compliance for Multi-Canister Overpack design and fabrication. These reports have not yet been forwarded to us, but will be sent to D.C. when they become available.

cc: Board members