

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending June 27, 1997

Staff members Arcaro, Jellett and Robinson were on-site reviewing TWRS-related matters.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Activities: Key highlights this week include:

1. Plutonium Reclamation Facility (PRF) Accident Investigation Report: Based on the comments received on the draft accident investigation report, it will be significantly revised and a new draft issued for comment; probably next week. In particular, most comments relate to the lack of focus on PFP management, the need for additional detail on contributing causes, and identifying DOE-HQ responsibility for administering DOE-wide systems.

2. PRF Radiological Release: Since the accident, considerable public and worker concern has been expressed over the possible release of radioactive material from the explosion. DOE has asserted that no release occurred. This week, the *accident* investigation team realized that surveys performed just days after the accident do show extremely minor, but detectable, smearable contamination outside the PRF doors. While this contamination may have previously existed, to assert that the accident did not cause this contamination is not possible.

3. PRF Emergency Response Investigation: The draft investigation report is expected to be released for review and comment next week. This week, the *response* investigation team discovered that, contrary to prior PFP management assertions, the eight exposed workers were **NOT** whole-body frisked before being sent to the hospital and their nasal smears, while taken, were **NOT** taken per procedure (i.e., did not use the appropriate swab material) and were **NOT** analyzed until **June 13th**.

4. DOE-RL Readiness Assessment (RA) at PFP: The DOE-RL RA for resuming fissile material handling at PFP began June 23rd. On June 26th, Mr. Gubanc observed a drill (Continuous Air Monitor alarm during fissile material movement) conducted by PFP for the RA team. The workers performed acceptably but the drill team's formality and control were poor. The DOE-RL RA team clearly recognized these deficiencies.

B. Presentation to Public: On June 25th, Mr. Gubanc presented an overview of the DNFSB to the Oregon Hanford Waste Board. At the same meeting, a former Hanford worker and the parents of one of the workers exposed during the PRF explosion, made highly critical statements of DOE's conduct during and after the accident. The Waste Board suggested that the DNFSB consider meeting with the PFP workers who are voicing concerns about their health and the adequacy and conduct of the site's emergency response.

cc:

Board Members