

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 9, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: D. G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representative

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending October 9, 1998

Staff member M. Merritt and outside expert Joe Leary were on site Tuesday and Wednesday reviewing PFP. Staff member L. Zull was on site assisting with Site Representative duties. Outside expert Dave Boyd was on site assisting with oversight of the Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS) Phase I review at the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS).

A. Recommendation 95-2: On October 8, DOE completed its Phase I Verification Review of the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS). The team found that TWRS is ready to proceed with preparations for a Phase II Review. The team identified eight "Opportunities for Improvement" for the contractor that include:

- 1) improving the Fluor Daniel Hanford expectations for ISMS,
- 2) more clearly defining roles and responsibilities for managers and supervisors,
- 3) improving the feedback process (self assessments and corrective action),
- 4) eliminating inconsistencies in the work control/hazards analysis process.

The Board's site representative and outside expert closely observed the review and believe that the review team did a thorough job and reached an appropriate conclusion. A more detailed staff report will follow.

B. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): Staff member Mike Merritt and outside expert Joe Leary toured PFP and met with DOE-RL and contractor personnel about plutonium stabilization options. In particular, the staff wanted to obtain clarification to the DOE response to the Board's letter of July 13, 1998, and to discuss what fundamental problems are preventing PFP restart and accelerated stabilization of plutonium bearing materials. DOE-RL did present some new information to clarify their response to the Board's letter. Given the information presented to date, the staff believes the fundamental problems are not technical, but involve contractor project management and appropriate allocations of the resources already available to PFP.

Also apparent to the staff is the need for improved direction and oversight on the part of DOE-RL. This is a weakness recognized by DOE-RL, and action taken to date includes relieving the Assistant Manager for Facility Transition (AMF) of some of his collateral duties so that he may focus more time on PFP, and bringing more personnel into the AMF organization.

C. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): This week at KW Basin, SNFP personnel began installation of piping systems associated with the Integrated Water Treatment System. Although this milestone is about one week later than planned, the completion date may still be met. The Board's staff will forward an updated status of the project milestones to be completed by February 1999.

cc: Board members