

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 26, 2005

**TO:** K. Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** D. Grover, W. Linzau, and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives  
**SUBJ:** Activity Report for the Week Ending August 26, 2005

Transuranic Waste Retrieval: While tilting a drum of transuranic waste to remove it from the storage array, the bottom became partially detached and some material fell out. The workers quickly set the drum back down, minimizing the release, and evacuated the work area. Facility management reviewed the emergency action levels and correctly initiated an alert level emergency. During the response, it was determined that the material released from the drum was not radioactive and no workers were contaminated. The facility has suspended future retrieval pending a review of the event. One area expected to be reviewed is the need for additional evaluation of drum integrity. The drum in question, while having two holes in the side, passed visual inspection for the drum bottom integrity. The facility has processes in place to safely handle degraded drums and these were used in the recovery to complete overpacking of the failed container. The site reps will monitor the evaluation of current work practices and improvements to prevent a recurrence of the loss of drum integrity resulting in release during handling.

K Basin Closure Project (KBC): The project conducted a meeting to consolidate comments for the 90 percent design review of the Mobile Solidification System (MOSS) (discussed in last week's activity report). Several reviewers identified similar concerns with the lack of finalized requirements to aid in assessing the design adequacy. The reviewers also identified the lack of approved criticality and fire hazard analyses for the system to support the review.

Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): The contractor Readiness Assessment (RA) for size reduction of the plutonium reclamation facility pencil tanks initiated this week. After the first day, issues regarding training and the radiological risk ranking were raised that resulted in the facility suggesting a pause in the RA to allow the issues to be resolved. The Fluor Hanford (FH) procedure had been changed to identify the criteria for terminating a review before completion instead of allowing pauses following the failed Sludge Water System readiness review. After several days, the RA team determined that the termination criteria were met. The team also considered the potential negative impact the review schedule was having on the resolution of issues. The termination also prevented the RA from serving as a tool to achieve readiness instead of evaluating readiness. PFP will formally review the identified issues using the corrective action management process and conduct another self assessment with an independent FH management assessment before redeclaring readiness to start the activity.

EM-1 Site Visit: The new Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM) reviewed various Hanford projects and met with site personnel. During a DOE all-hands meeting, he emphasized that DOE is essentially a large acquisition organization, and must exercise appropriate oversight after acquisition, including presence in the field. He stated that one key area to improve EM's credibility is to fully identify and manage project risks.