

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 16, 2007

TO: K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: R. Quirk and W. Linzau, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for the Week Ending February 16, 2007

K Basins Closure (KBC): A number of workers were exposed to an environment that had elevated airborne contamination levels during recovery from troubleshooting of the pumps in the Hose-in-Hose (HIH) transfer system (see Hanford Activity Report 2/9/07). A continuous air sampler indicated 33 DAC Hours of alpha contamination. The work plan did not specify the use of respirators and it is believed that 14 people are submitting samples for bioassay. Fortunately, the work had been stopped at the request of the operators to require the use of respirators. The high DAC issue was not identified until the next day. Areas being investigated include: the quality of the mock-ups, personnel proficiency for working with glovebags, not using real-time airborne contamination monitors, the appropriateness of using un-taped velcro seals on the glovebag pass-throughs and not using active HEPA filtration for high airborne contamination hazards.

Fluor Hanford, Inc. (FHI) sent a letter to the Richland Operations Office (RL) noting that as a result of problems with the HIH transfer system, it is likely that the transfer of the K East sludge to K West will not be completed until at least June 2007. The letter notes that this is an optimistic schedule and if extensive repairs are needed to the HIH transfer system, the date could slip to September 2007. The completion date for this in the implementation plan for Board Recommendation 2000-1 is May 2007.

The project plans to recommence transferring sludge this weekend using the installed backup pumps in three of the booster stations and additional features, such as booster station pump vibration monitors, a duplex strainer skid downstream of the container suction pump, and modifications of the dilution lance and the suspended solids control scheme.

FHI is considering using divers to complete work in the basins, such as sludge vacuuming, debris removal, and equipment maintenance. A Request for Proposal (RFP) for diving services was issued last week, and responses are expected next week but the divers would not commence work until May. RL cautioned FHI that issues raised two years ago for this approach need to be resolved.

Richland Operations Office: The site rep met with RL personnel to discuss the RFP for the Mission Support Contract (MSC). The draft MSC does not include management or operations of nuclear facilities, but requires the contractor to provide services in these facilities, such as maintenance of the fire protection equipment. The DOE requirements for performing maintenance are in DOE Order 433.1, but the draft MSC does not have this order in the list of applicable directives. RL is drafting revised MSC RFP language to address this inconsistency.