

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 6, 2015

TO: S. A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: P. Fox and D. Gutowski Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending November 6, 2015

Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP). The site rep met with RL and contractor representatives to further understand the evaluation of a PISA that was declared to determine if the recent chemical reactions that occurred in the Plutonium Reclamation Facility canyon were adequately covered by the PFP safety basis (see Activity Report 10/09/2015). The evaluation determined that the condition does not represent a PISA. The site rep agrees with this assessment.

100K West Area. The site rep observed a contractor Hazard Review Board (HRB) evaluation of a work package that prepares the engineered containers located in the basin for sludge retrieval. The HRB was well led and thorough, and there was significant participation by members. It was apparent that the Field Work Supervisors are well prepared for this high hazard work and that the work team training, which included use of a high fidelity mockup, was also thorough.

Tank Farms. The site rep observed an evaluated field drill from the central shift office and incident command post. The scenario involved discovery of elevated radiological readings during a waste transfer.

The contractor consolidated respiratory requirements from the General Hazard Analysis for Low Threshold Vapors and Odors and the subsequent standing order (see Activity Reports 5/9, 11/7/2014) into a Management Directed Respiratory Protection Form (RPF). The requirements for use of supplied air in the tank farms did not change. Workers called a stop work on issuance of all respiratory equipment except for that used for TSR surveillances due to confusion regarding the new RPF. This was resolved after two days with a revision to the RPF.

618-10 Burial Grounds. Workers noted a white vapor emerging from the Vertical Pipe Unit (VPU) auger bit stem after it was disconnected in preparation for in-situ characterization. Radiological surveys did not detect any contamination, but industrial hygiene monitoring showed 25 ppm carbon monoxide. The site superintendent stopped VPU work and all personnel exited the work area. Project personnel believe the vapor was most likely steam. As a precaution, they have revised the augering procedure to allow venting time following augering and will now run the ventilation on the auger tool enclosure during both augering and bit removal. The procedure change also incorporated lessons learned from recent operational experience.

Waste Treatment Plant. The ashfall technical working group met. The primary purpose of the meeting was to develop a work plan, including activity ties and related schedule.

Richland Operations Office. DOE RL, supported by the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington Department of Ecology held a public meeting in Richland to discuss proposed changes to Tri-Party Agreement milestones. The proposal adds or modifies 34 milestones. The changes are necessary to better align the milestones with priorities, current information, and anticipated funding levels.