

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 28, 2003

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Tim Hunt, Oak Ridge Site Cognizant Engineer
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending March 28, 2003

Staff outside expert R. West was on site this week providing site representative coverage.

A. Building 9212 Enriched Uranium Operations (EUO) Wet Chemistry Restart. Wet chemistry first use operations began last Friday with the oxide dissolver system. Operations were suspended shortly after starting when pH results from a steam condensate sample came back below the minimum allowed value. The startup was repeated on Tuesday to obtain an additional set of samples. Shortly after admitting steam to the calandria (heat exchanger to establish the temperature to start dissolution and aid the recirculation of the product in the oxide dissolver), a high conductivity alarm was received on the condensate drain and a sample determined that pH was less than allowed. After shutting down the system, additional samples confirmed the low pH. In view of this repeated indication of a leak across the steam calandria, EUO management directed action to proceed along parallel paths to repair or replace the calandria. A replacement, which was ordered for a similar application in Building 9206, is on site. It is of a different design so that engineering will have to verify that the replacement would satisfy system requirements.

With the delay in oxide dissolver operations, restart efforts have been shifted to establish conditions for operation of the wiped film evaporator and denitrator next week. (2-A)

B. Y-12 Environmental, Safety and Health (ES&H) Review. A team from the Office of Independent Oversight and Performance Assurance completed its two week ES&H management review at Y-12 this week. The inspection focused on feedback and improvement, functionality of safety systems, roles and responsibilities, and the requirements management process. An informal briefing of the results was provided to the plant this Thursday. The team plans to provide a draft report of results of the review on Monday, April 7th and conduct a formal briefing of results on Thursday, April 10th. The informal briefing noted potential issues or opportunities for improvement with regard to the performance of the unreviewed safety question process, correction of findings for some assessments, status of procedures for feedback and improvement below the institutional level, implementation of controls by production from job hazard analyses, performance of radiological controls procedures in Building 9215, use of skill of the craft for maintenance work, evaluation of the removal of temporary modifications, updating of hazard controls for construction work with changes in condition of the work site, and configuration control of fire protection systems. (1-A)