

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 12, 2006

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: R. Todd Davis/Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for the Week Ending May 12, 2006

Mr. Davis and Mr. Owen were at the Board's Headquarters in Washington, D. C., Monday through Thursday. Mr. Davis was out of the office on Friday.

A. Vacuum Pump Filter - Criticality Safety. As noted last week, a Potential Inadequacy in the Safety Analysis (PISA) had not yet been declared an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) regarding indications of excessive enriched uranium hold-up and presence of moderation (oil) in a filter housing associated with casting furnaces. This week, BWXT declared a USQ and also categorized this situation under the Significance Category-1 nuclear criticality safety criterion regarding loss of multiple controls with no valid controls remaining. As of this report, BWXT continues to develop a Justification for Continued Operation providing the technical basis to support safely approaching the filter and remediating the situation.

BWXT is starting an investigation that is intended to approach the level of detail and rigor of a Type B accident investigation. The team leader is from BWXT's corporate office. Two YSO personnel have been assigned to closely observe the BWXT investigation.

The site rep. notes that Y-12's external reporting of the USQ and the Significance Category-1 criticality safety concern was done via an update of the original PISA report. Such report updates are typically not distributed to DOE Headquarters and field management. While categorized as a USQ and Significance Category-1 criticality safety concern, the title of the updated report does not identify the USQ nor the heightened criticality safety concern. The updated report also does not identify the presence of oil discovered last week.

cc:
Board Members