

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 23, 1998

**TO:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director  
**FROM:** M. T. Sautman, R. F. Warther

**SUBJ:** RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending January 23, 1998

The Board toured the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System Tuesday and met with RFFO and K-H Wednesday. Jack Mansfield also toured buildings 371, 707, 771, 776/777 and 779. Burnfield, Helfrich, and Volgenau (OE) continued to observe the ISMS review. Joe Leary (OE) attended meetings on the plutonium standard and related topics.

**Fire Department.** K-H submitted to RFFO their strategy for addressing fire department staffing and operations issues. K-H has provided funding for three additional fire fighter personnel and one fire prevention program inspector. The contractor agrees with the Human Resources Assessment conclusion that 14 firefighters per shift are needed based against historical hazards. However, K-H intends to reevaluate this conclusion to reflect recent risk reduction work and future site activities. Bill Shields has been provided with a copy of the strategy for additional staff review.

**Residues.** During the Board visit, David Crawford (NN-51) clarified that his office rejected RFETS' safeguards termination limit variance request for the remaining residues (salts, ash, SS&C) and would reject any future requests that used a similar justification. He stated that their primary concern was the potential for thousands of TRU drums to be stored for many years at RFETS in unsafeguarded waste facilities (e.g., 440, 664). He believes that shipment of TRU drums to WIPP will take much longer than currently anticipated. His comments implied that the primary concern could be addressed by storing the residues according to safeguards requirements (i.e., inside the protected area) while at RFETS. Although he did not identify any safeguards and security (S&S) concerns with transportation to and disposal at WIPP, he stated during a subsequent informal discussion that there may be S&S issues at WIPP.

**B771 Tap and Drain.** The management review (MR) for draining the oxalic acid system is scheduled to begin next week. RFFO has decided that the MR will only cover this system and that RFFO will formally oversee it. The facility representatives (FR) are questioning whether SSOC is really ready to begin because of the large number of last minute changes to the Integrated Work Control Package (IWCP) and discrepancies between the IWCP and the Engineering Order. The Site Reps are still encountering some confusion about how the activity will actually be performed. An examination of the piping to address FR questions located a previously unidentified low point. Rather than installing an additional tap, SSOC plans to raise that section of the pipe. In addition, the FRs and the union are concerned about cracks in the glovebox windows and deteriorated gaskets in the glovebox. The Site Reps are investigating these issues and plan to observe next week's MR.

SSOC has also modified their disposition plans for the solutions. In order to support ion exchange resin cementation, the B774 Bottlebox is now the preferred option for low concentration solutions and blended down high concentration ones. The CWTS will only be used when there is not enough solution to blend to below 6 g Pu/l. They wish to avoid using hydroxide precipitation because of the time required to authorize its restart and its low throughput. Disposition paths for dodecane/ TBP, hydrogen peroxide, and contaminated Freon 12 solutions have not been identified yet.

cc: Board Members