

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 13, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: C. H. Keilers / R. T. Davis
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending October 13, 2000

Americium-Curium (AmCm) Stabilization: WSRC continues project work for the vitrification of the AmCm solution in Tank 17.1 of F-Canyon (site rep weekly 6/30/00). Pretreatment redesign to correct non-failsafe components is expected to be complete in December. The in-cell vitrification system design is slightly behind schedule; however, critical decision 3B to approve vitrification equipment construction is still expected in late 2001. WSRC has been attempting to resolve filming problems with the Multi Purpose Processing Facility shielded windows. A subcontractor was hired to remove and clean the windows; however, this activity has been unsuccessful because the canyon wall is impinging on the window frames. WSRC is pursuing other alternatives to clean the windows and will also consider the use of in-cell cameras. WSRC is also reviewing the potential impacts of qualifying the vitrified material form for disposal in a geologic repository. This activity is not currently within the scope of this project and may impact both cost and schedule. In addition, DOE-SR and WSRC continue to evaluate and address the issues identified in the Board's letter dated August 18, 2000.

Salt Processing Project: On Thursday, DOE held a public meeting in North Augusta to discuss the contracting approach for the design and construction of the Salt Processing Project. DOE has requested that expressions of interest be submitted by October 19. One-on-one discussions between interested companies and DOE will be held in Washington, D.C. in November. DOE is developing the Request for Proposal with a draft version expected in December and a final version in July 2001. Proposals will be received in September 2001 and the contract is expected to be awarded in January 2002. DOE is considering two contracting strategies. The first strategy is to select a contractor to perform management integration. Actual design and construction work would be performed by fixed-price subcontractors. The second strategy is to select a contractor to manage and perform the design, construction, startup testing, and operation of the facility. Either strategy will be implemented in four phases (preliminary design, detail design, construction/startup, and long term operation) with options to extend the contract based on satisfactory performance.

During the public meeting, DOE provided a brief overview of the three cesium removal technologies including the status of on-going research and development activities. DOE plans to select a preferred alternative in June 2001.

H-Canyon: On Thursday, a dissolver lid weighing approximately 2000 lbs was accidentally dropped into the section 6 hot side cell. An initial inspection of the cell, which contains both of the H-Canyon dissolvers, did not identify any damage. A crane operator was moving the section 6 cell cover when the cover became unbalanced and the lid, which was stored on top of the cover, slid off. This particular cell cover is a newer design and weighs significantly less than the older style concrete cell covers (approximately 3,500 lbs versus 26,000 lbs). There is currently no procedures or training that address moving cell covers with equipment stored on top; however, this is routinely done in both canyons. WSRC will perform a more detailed inspection for damage and will evaluate retrieval options for the lid. Additionally, WSRC will perform an engineering evaluation to develop guidance and training for crane operators on this issue. In the interim, WSRC will require that equipment be removed from the newer style cell covers prior to movement.