

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 21, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
J. J. McConnell, Deputy Technical Director
FROM: R. T. Davis/ T. D. Burns
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending February 21, 2003

HEU Blend Down: Last week, DOE completed their readiness assessment for loading Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) into shipping containers for shipment to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) vendor. WSRC implemented appropriate corrective actions for all identified findings. The Authorization Agreement for this activity has been signed. WSRC also completed the first blend of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) with natural uranium. Preliminary samples indicate that the LEU solution meets the TVA purity specifications. Final sample results are expected this weekend.

The TVA vendor, Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS), is currently constructing the unloading facility to receive the LEU solution. Four public groups have challenged whether NFS properly followed the NEPA process for this new facility. This issue may impact the ability to ship LEU. Based on current solution storage capacity, WSRC will have to curtail H-Canyon processing activities if LEU shipments do not begin by early Summer. Loading the LR-230 shipping containers with LEU and storing them locally will help alleviate the situation. However, it is not clear that DOE will pursue this option because of requirements in the interagency agreement with TVA.

F-Canyon: WSRC continues suspension plan activities at F-Canyon. Caustic flushing of the 1B bank in first cycle began this week. In addition, WSRC continues deactivation work for the old hot crane. Earlier this month, DOE-SR provided additional guidance to WSRC on specific activities that could continue at F-Canyon. Specifically, DOE-SR has directed WSRC to continue activities that will not affect operational readiness of the F-Canyon. These activities include the following:

- ! Lab Solution Processing Relocation: This activity will provide an alternate means of processing lab waste, which is currently handled by F-Canyon.
- ! Reduced Contaminated Water Handling: Project to reduce the amount of contaminated water (e.g., potentially contaminated rain water) that must be processed at F-Canyon.
- ! Relocation of Cold Chemical Makeup: This capability will be transferred to H-Canyon.
- ! Alternate Cooling at 235-F: This activity will eliminate the cooling tie between 235-F and F-Canyon.
- ! Relocation of F-Area Emergency Operating Center

In addition, WSRC will continue deactivation of systems that do not impact F-Canyon PUREX operations (e.g., the old hot crane and the Multi-Purpose Processing Facility).