

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 10, 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 October 10, 2003

Staff members J. Contardi, R. Robinson, and M. Duncan were on-site Tuesday and Wednesday reviewing the status of salt and sludge disposition activities. Specific areas of focus included impacts to the salt program and tank farm operations resulting from the Idaho federal court decision, start-up of the new Actinide Removal Process (512-S), Saltstone facility modifications, and Tank 48 recovery plans.

Outside expert R. Lewis was on-site Monday through Thursday observing the DOE readiness assessment for start-up of the FB-Line process to stabilize plutonium consistent with DOE-STD-3013 requirements.

**Depleted Uranium:** In a December 20, 2002 correspondence, the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM-1) provided the Board with a project plan for disposition of excess depleted, natural, and low-enriched uranium stored at SRS. This project plan committed to identify a recommended disposition path for low-enriched ( $\leq 1.5\%$ ) uranium oxide (260 MTU) by September 30, 2003, and for depleted uranium oxide (20,000 MTU) by January 31, 2004.

WSRC submitted recommendations for disposition of both low-enriched and depleted uranium oxide to DOE-SR in late-September. The recommendations are to send low-enriched uranium oxide to the Nevada Test Site by truck and to send the depleted uranium oxide to Envirocare of Utah by rail for disposition as low-level waste. DOE-SR has now accepted these recommendations. Development of project schedules is underway.

**Plutonium Packaging and Stabilization:** DOE commenced a limited scope Readiness Assessment (RA) for Phase II of the Packaging and Stabilization Project on Monday, October 6, 2003. The contractor RA was completed last week (site rep weekly 10/3/03). The DOE assessment included the design, fabrication, and installation of two high-fire furnaces, modifications made to the Bagless Transfer System to accommodate taller inner 3013 containers and the associated support systems. The RA is scheduled to be complete late next week.

**Receiving Basin for Off-site Fuel:** Over the last few years, WSRC has been consolidating storage of spent nuclear fuel at the L-Basin facility. Last fall, WSRC completed the de-inventory of K-Basin. A safe shutdown and deactivation plan was implemented at K-Basin to minimize surveillance and maintenance. At the Receiving Basin for Off-site Fuel (RBOF), only four fuel assemblies remain. These should be transferred within the next two weeks. WSRC has developed a similar safe shutdown plan for RBOF. Once this plan is implemented, surveillance will be limited to inspection of basin water level and the periodic inspection of the waste cell.