

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 7, 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 November 7, 2003

Staff members A. Gwal, A. Matteucci, and L. Zull were on-site this Tuesday through Thursday to review safety-related electrical distribution, auxiliary power, and instrumentation and control systems in the radioactive waste Concentration, Storage, and Transfer (CST) facilities. On Thursday, staff member L. Zull also reviewed the corrective actions being implemented in response to several recent inadvertent transfer events in the CST facilities.

**FB-Line:** Plutonium oxide stabilization activities (i.e., phase II of the plutonium packaging and stabilization project) began on October 24, 2003. To date, two cans of oxide have been stabilized and packaged in bagless transfer cans. However, the second can had contamination around the weld area. WSRC is developing a path forward for this can. The current FB-Line schedule is to process plutonium oxide over the weekend and continue packaging composite metals during the week.

**Receiving Basin for Offsite Fuels:** On October 28, 2003, WSRC completed the last transfer of spent nuclear fuel from the Receiving Basin for Offsite Fuels (RBOF). All spent nuclear fuel at SRS has now been consolidated at L-Basin. WSRC has developed a plan for safe shutdown and deactivation at RBOF that will be implemented to minimize surveillance and maintenance costs.

**Highly Enriched Uranium Blend Down:** WSRC is currently loading the twenty-sixth trailer with Low Enriched Uranium as a part of the Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) Blend Down program. Initial production of LEU was delayed several months because of delays at the Tennessee Valley Authority vendor; however, WSRC has implemented several process improvements to regain schedule. These improvements include increasing the LEU concentration and blend batch size. WSRC is also pursuing other options to increase throughput.

**TCON Project:** The independent NNSA Operational Readiness Review (ORR) team completed their field reviews and personnel interviews last week (site rep weekly 9/12/03). The ORR team's final report was issued this week and their findings were briefed to NNSA-SR and WSRC management on Wednesday. One pre-start finding was identified relating to the rigor of a newly implemented procedure validation process. Though of a lesser significance, some disappointing observations included numerous minor procedural non-compliances and inattention to detail by NNSA-SR in the issuance of the ORR Plan of Action. Upon closure of the pre-start finding, the ORR review team concluded that the newly installed TCON processes in Room 44 of Building 233-H can be started-up safely.

On Thursday, WSRC submitted proposed corrective actions to address the pre-start finding to NNSA-SR for review. Approval of hot operations is expected next week.