

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 9, 2004

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 April 9, 2004

NNSA Management Changes: The NNSA-SR site office manger, Mr. Ed Wilmot, officially stepped down last weekend to assume his new position as manager of the NNSA Los Alamos Site Office. Mr. Wilmot's replacement, Mr. Richard Arkin, will report on-site April 19, 2004. Mr. Bruce Wilson, the current NNSA-SR deputy site office manager, will serve as acting manager until Mr. Arkin's arrival.

Meteorological Phenomenon: A meteorological phenomenon known as a microburst – a localized, temporal gust of extreme winds approaching tornadic velocities – occurred in a non-nuclear area in the sites' central shops (N-Area). The event displaced two 8,000 gallon tankers approximately 20 feet and knocked another on its side. A small storage shed was also displaced. Fortunately, no injuries resulted from the event.

TCON Project: WSRC believes they have successfully resolved the palladium loading issues associated with the newly designed TCAP isotopic separation columns to be installed in Building 233-H using a combination of rotational and vibratory techniques (site rep weekly 2/13/04). With the previous void spaces now filled, the columns are expected to meet their performance requirements. However, the more complete column filling has resulted in a shortage of granular palladium material. Two columns have been filled and reinstalled for cold testing, while the third awaits refilling pending receipt of additional palladium. Introduction of tritium into the newly installed TCON process systems in Room 44 of Building 233-H is scheduled for May 1, 2004.

The WSRC Readiness Assessment (RA) for Building 234-7H has been completed and all pre-start findings have been resolved. Start-up authority for this new facility was delegated by NNSA to the WSRC Chief Officer for the Operations Business Unit. Thus, the recently completed contractor RA was the final evaluation of facility readiness prior to start-up. Reservoirs containing tritium were relocated into Building 234-7H this week.

FB-Line: The Facility Evaluation Board (FEB) conducted an independent contractor assessment of the FB-Line facility during February 2004. A supplemental evaluation was also performed in March 2004 because of issues noted with implementation of Integrated Safety Management (ISM) and an interruption in facility operations due to a Technical Safety Requirement violation. Overall the FEB rated FB-Line as below average, which indicates the standards of performance were minimal and need to be raised. The FEB noted that increased management attention and emphasis on self-assessment is warranted. Fundamental deficiencies were identified in procedure compliance, implementation of safety controls and the fire protection program. The supplemental evaluation team noted improvements with regard to facility performance; however, the limited scope of the supplemental review precluded conclusions with regard to overall ISM implementation. FB-Line management is evaluating the fundamental causes for programmatic deficiencies and will identify immediate and long-term corrective actions.