

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 21, 2000

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
J. K. Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, D. J. Grover, RFETS Site Representatives

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending January 21, 2000

Adherence to Safety Controls/Conduct of Operations. As discussed in the site rep. report of December 23, 1999, DOE-RFFO noted a recent trend of increasing problems with adherence to authorization basis (AB) safety controls and conduct of operations in general. DOE-RFFO issued a Preliminary Notice of Non-Compliance stating these violations indicate a programmatic breakdown of AB management as provided for in nuclear facility Authorization Agreements between DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill.

Late last week, Kaiser-Hill submitted a response to the DOE-RFFO Preliminary Notice of Non-Compliance. Kaiser-Hill continues to identify the main causes as a lack of management focus on adherence to AB safety controls, ineffective corrective actions and a lack of accountability for violations. In addition to discussing several short term actions taken by Rocky Mountain Remediation Services (RMRS), Safe Sites of Colorado (SSOC) and Kaiser-Hill, the response identifies certain long-term actions. Chief among the long term actions are: (1) Kaiser-Hill is instituting a weekly surveillance program in RMRS facilities to assess adherence to AB controls and proper conduct of operations; and (2) actions for SSOC facilities to foster conservative decisions on AB adherence issues and to improve control and tracking of AB surveillances. DOE-RFFO is reviewing the Kaiser-Hill submittal and plans to respond in the near future. (1-C)

Salt Residue Processing: Late this week, a small amount of salt residue (electro-refining salts, Item Description Code #411) that had been removed from the Building 371 Stacker/Retriever (having a nitrogen atmosphere) underwent a small pyrophoric reaction (sparking) in the air atmosphere of the repackaging glovebox. RFETS moved the material back into the Stacker/Retriever and is determining a path forward. The site reps. will follow-up on implications to overall characterization (low risk/high risk) of this salt residue sub-population. (3-A)

Public Interaction. The site reps. met with staff of the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments to discuss site rep. activities. Major issues discussed included the delay to startup of the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS) due to problems with the PuSPS laser welder for the 3013 inner can and the status of integrated safety management implementation at RFETS.

cc: Board Members