

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 18, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: R. Arcaro, & D. G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives

SUBJ: Activity Report for the Week Ending June 18, 1999

Staff members S. Stokes and J. Troan and outside expert D. Volgenau were on site this week to review the Bechtel Hanford Inc. work control process.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant: DOE-RL approved an exemption to the requirement to perform a full Operational Readiness Review prior to the restart of the prototype vertical calciner. Instead, B&W Hanford Company (BWHC) will perform an activity-level start-up review that is modeled on the requirements of Integrated Safety Management. The work scope, hazards, controls, and feedback and improvement plans, as they relate to the prototype calciner, will be reviewed and documented in affidavits. As a result of this exemption, BWHC expects to start the operation in early July—nearly one month ahead of the (delayed) schedule. (III-A.1.a.)

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): On June 15, Mr. Ogg met with Mr. Ray Jones, the new Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) Vice President for the SNFP. Mr. Jones has a strong nuclear background and expressed a strong interest in overcoming the hurdles confronting the project. Because the position of Vice President is new, clear lines of authority and responsibility have not yet been defined. As this information becomes available the site representatives will pass it along.

Other organizational changes underway include the assignment of several employees of Westinghouse Safety Management Solutions to manage the development, review and approval of project safety analysis reports. In addition, the chief engineer is working to strengthen the capability of the project's technical staff.(I-A.3.a., III-A.3.)

C. Sluicing of Tank C-106: Lockheed Martin Hanford Company (LMHC) has removed approximately 4 feet of sludge from Tank C-106. Thermal modeling indicates that this activity has removed enough of the heat generating sludge so that water additions will no longer be required to keep the waste temperature below authorization basis limits. Ventilation will likely still be required and temperature monitoring will continue. LMHC also plans to continue sluicing the tank until it becomes impractical to remove additional solids. Once confirmatory sampling and temperature monitoring is complete, LMHC expects to request DOE approval to close the high heat safety issue. (III-A.2.b.)

cc: Board members