

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 16, 2001

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending February 16, 2001

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). The PuSPS project has recently completed a series of 25 outer can welds in support of outer can weld qualification and sent weld specimens off-site for radiography. Operational dry runs, drills and demonstrations continue and members of the DOE and Kaiser-Hill Operational Readiness Review (ORR) teams were provided a detailed indoctrination on PuSPS this week. Building 371 still expects to declare readiness and start the Kaiser-Hill ORR at the end of February. (3-A)

Building 771 Intakes Follow-up. The Kaiser-Hill investigation to identify the source of the intakes continues. No probable cause has been identified to date. Bioassay data for the volunteer population continues to be received. About half of the volunteer population results received so far are slightly above the decision level. Due to slower-than-expected receipt of bioassay data, the Kaiser-Hill investigation is now expected to continue until about mid-March.

As noted last week, a team led by DOE-EH personnel is conducting a separate review of the intakes issue. The field work for the DOE team was completed this week. During out-briefs for RFETS management, the DOE team noted certain areas for improvement related to radiological protection. The team will be developing recommendations to improve radiological protection at RFETS and issue those recommendations, pending results of the Kaiser-Hill investigation. (3-B)

Recommendation 2000-2. Following a series of discussions with Kaiser-Hill on the scope and intent of DOE 2000-2 Implementation Plan commitments, DOE-RFFO issued guidance on commitments 3, 4 and 5 and formally requested that Kaiser-Hill complete the commitments (commitment 3 is due by February 2001). This guidance has been provided to staff for review. (1-C)

RFETS Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS). As called for by the DOE ISMS Guide (DOE G 450.4), DOE-RFFO started their first annual review of the RFETS ISMS this week. DOE-RFFO has augmented the team performing the assessment with senior personnel from DOE-Headquarters and certain DOE field offices. (1-C)

Feedback and Improvement. As noted a number of times in site rep. reports (most recently January 5th and December 29th) as well as a January 5th DOE-RFFO letter to Kaiser-Hill, the conduct of "fact-finding" meetings following events or occurrences has often not brought out important information from which to determine proper corrective/improvement actions. Following reviews of this issue held in mid-January and this week by DOE-RFFO, Kaiser-Hill is implementing several actions to improve fact-finding. These actions include designating a limited number of managers as fact-finding meeting directors, improved guidance and training on fact-finding, and increased monitoring of fact-finding by senior management. (1-C)