

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 9, 2001

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending March 9, 2001

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). The PuSPS project has experienced additional delays (see site rep. report of February 23rd) in completing various procedures and fully implementing authorization basis controls related to PuSPS. These issues have delayed, by about another 10 days, final dry runs and line management demonstrations to the week of March 19th. As a result, declaration of readiness by Building 371 is now projected for March 23rd, to be followed by the start of the Kaiser-Hill Operational Readiness Review. (3-A)

Thermal Stabilization in Building 707. As reported during the last two weeks, there had been a failure to implement a Building 707 Basis for Interim Operation (BIO) Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) control for thermal stabilization operations. Specifically, failure to implement a TSR control calling for sampling/characterization to identify the presence of reactive materials. This violation was determined following unusual glovebox pressure fluctuations on two successive thermal stabilization runs on "oily material." Fact finding and other evaluations are in progress. These evaluations are appropriately attempting to determine where the programmatic breakdown(s) occurred in properly implementing this TSR control prior to the recent runs; however, there appears to be a lack of emphasis on also evaluating the actions of DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill just prior to the runs and subsequent to the unusual glovebox fluctuations. The site rep. discussed this issue with DOE-RFFO management. (3-B)

Recommendation 2000-2. Last week, DOE-RFFO formally transmitted to DOE Headquarters the Phase 1 Assessments for Building 371 safety class, confinement ventilation, and fire protection systems required under commitment 3 of the DOE Implementation Plan for Recommendation 2000-2. This week, DOE-Headquarters, DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill personnel have been discussing the expectations for RFETS in carrying out the Secretary of Energy's February 20th memorandum on "Establishment of System Engineer Programs" under Recommendation 2000-2. In particular, DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill are attempting to determine the appropriate application for RFETS of the "Graded Approach" guidance provided in the Secretary's memorandum. (1-C)

DOE Headquarters Independent Oversight Review. A team of personnel from the independent oversight group within the DOE Office of Environment, Safety and Health, EH-2, started a review this week at RFETS. The EH-2 team is looking at safety management implementation and is focusing on Building 371 and the Building 776/777 complex. The field work for the EH-2 review is planned to be completed by March 16th. (1-C)

cc: Board Members