

## **DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

February 20, 1998

**TO:** G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

**FROM:** P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives

**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending February 20, 1998

Tim Hunt and Outside Expert Dave Boyd were on site this week to review criticality safety and DOE-RL's Readiness Assessment at PFP. Dan Ogg was on military leave all week.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): The DOE-RL Readiness Assessment (RA) for PFP "Phase 1" fissile material handling was underway this week and is expected to complete field work on February 25. The final report and closeout with management is expected February 27. The RA team appears adequately staffed and no major issues have been identified to date.

After much discussion amongst DOE-RL, DOE-EM and DOE-EH, the path forward for PFP is evolving to be as follows:

1. By February 27, PFP will issue a "Startup Plan" for Phase 1 which will clearly identify what specific operations are authorized, how resumption of activities will ramp up and how these activities will be monitored for performance. The DOE-RL RA team will need to concur that their review adequately bounds the fissile material handling activities described in the plan.
2. PFP will prepare a stabilization operations resumption strategy/plan. This plan will address the sequencing of furnace, vertical calciner, cementation and repackaging operations as well as fissile material handling resumption by the PFP stabilization operations staff. The plan will also need to identify planning assumptions (i.e., budget) and recommend when and what type of readiness evaluation(s) be performed.

We will obtain and forward these plans when they become available.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): During the SNFP critical path meeting this week, Duke Engineering Services, Hanford (DESH) announced that there were now over 130 Deviation Notices against the SNFP baseline. DESH has forwarded these to Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) although DESH management is now "scrubbing" them for accuracy and completeness. While this portends potential changes to the baseline, DESH is increasingly confident that they are ferreting out the known barriers to project completion.

C. N-Basin Fuel: Last week's report identified that the N-Basin had exceeded the spent fuel quantity (204 lbs) and form assumptions used in its safety documentation. Bechtel Hanford, Inc. (BHI) has justified continued operation as acceptable under their Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) process since they do not exceed DOE-RL's risk guideline of 10 rem at 30 meters for 24 hours. (DOE-RL line management supports BHI's use of the guidelines in this manner.) We are requesting staff assistance to review this situation since this practice does not appear consistent with past practice.

cc: Board members