

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 5, 1998

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: D. G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representative
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending June 5, 1998

Staff member Rich Tontodonato was on site assisting with Site Representative duties.

A. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project (SNFP): On June 4, The EPA and DOE-RL exchanged correspondence concerning Tri-Party Agreement negotiations on the SNFP. Because of the failure in negotiations to date, the EPA and Washington State Dept. of Ecology plan to enter into dispute resolution, and have called for high level discussions with DOE-RL and DOE-HQ. The DOE response to this letter indicates that members of the Board may be invited to attend the meetings.

On June 5, Mr. Ogg attended a meeting of the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB), where the SNFP was discussed at length. A video tape of the May 12 Congressional Hearing was played, in part, for HAB members and a large audience of interested public. Ron Green, the new president of Fluor Daniel Hanford Co. (FDH) was introduced, and FDH presented the new management organization for the SNFP that has merged FDH and Duke Engineering & Services Hanford (DESH) personnel into one single organization led by Nancy Williams. Charles Aycock will serve as the deputy.

In the field, work at the Canister Storage Building (CSB) is progressing well. DESH has successfully completed many of the system pre-operational tests, and major components of the MCO Handling Machine have been moved into the CSB for assembly.

B. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP): Although Phase 1 operations (Analytical Laboratory, Plutonium Process Support Laboratory (PPSL), solid wastes, and vaults) have officially resumed, corrective actions resulting from an April 1998 uptake incident in the Analytical Laboratory have delayed the commencement of work significantly. The principal corrective action is a review of all procedures for radiological work at PFP to ensure that vulnerabilities to radiological hazards are adequately identified and controlled. This review took much longer than expected and is still continuing. However, most routine procedures have been cleared and some are in progress.

The contractor Operational Readiness Review (ORR) for Phase 2 operations (normal fissile material movements and thermal stabilization) is expected to begin this summer. Separate readiness evaluations will need to be conducted for activities not covered by the ORR, such as cementation and calciner operations. Babcock and Wilcox Hanford Co. (BWHC) submitted a Plan of Action for the ORR to DOE-RL on May 21. The Board's staff plans to monitor the progress of Phase 1 work, and assess the effectiveness of BWHC and DOE-RL ORR plans for Phase II.

cc: Board members