

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 8, 1999

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
K. Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director

FROM: M. T. Sautman

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for Week Ending July 8, 1999

Recommendation 94-1. SSOC has been working with a vendor to come up with a new filter design for convenience can filters that avoids filter corrosion and plugging issues. A prototype has been developed using a plastic filter element attached to the can. The Site Rep's main concern with the design is whether the tape being used will be sufficiently resistant to degradation to hold the filter in place during interim storage. In addition, LANL recently repeated experiments on the adsorption of carbon tetrachloride by granulated activated carbon (GAC) to address uncertainties with sample leakage present in the earlier experiment. The results indicate that GAC will reduce the headspace CCl_4 concentrations to 2000 - 4000 ppm, which is below WIPP's 7510 ppm limit. Although the new experiments appear to have resolved the sample leakage issue, there were still some mass balance issues. (III-A.1.a)

Y2K Planning. The Site Rep reviewed a draft of the Year 2000 Sitewide Contingency Plan. For the most part, the draft plan looks good. Preparations are being made to ensure that critical supplies and fuel are available; generators have been maintained, tested, and are ready to operate; and personnel are standing by to address fire and freeze protection issues. The risk assessments for the nuclear facilities sometimes seemed inconsistent. For example, an alert, site area emergency, or general emergency could occur in most plutonium or waste facilities if a fire or spill occurs concurrently with a Y2K-induced HVAC or fire suppression system failure. However, the report claims that there is not any potential event that would lead to even an alert in B707 despite B707's similarity to other plutonium facilities. (I-A.2)

Ready 99. RFFO issued their evaluation report for the Ready 99 annual emergency preparedness exercise. RFFO concluded that the contractor did not adequately demonstrate the ability to plan and execute a radiological drill. RFFO is requiring an action plan to address their major deficiencies and recommendations, many of which were also noted by the technical staff. Based on the magnitude of the issues, the Site Rep believes it will take more than just some training and another practice drill to really address the problems. (I-A.4)

cc: Board members