

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 16, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
J. Kent Fortenberry, Deputy Technical Director
FROM: C. H. Keilers / R. T. Davis
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending July 16, 1999

Staff members Bamdad and Burns were on site this week for the Authorization Basis Symposium.

F/H Canyon Exhaust Systems Upgrade Project - This project is intended to improve the reliability of Safety Class ventilation. Last month, construction stopped and design development slowed due to long-anticipated inadequate funding. This week, Congress approved a DOE request to reprogram FY 99 funds from the Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility (APSF) line item to this and other SRS projects. Work is already restarting (site rep report 5/28/99). (III.A.1, III.A.3).

Authorization Basis Symposium - During the last few years, SRS has been improving their methodology for performing safety analyses, identifying safety systems and controls, and establishing authorization bases that include defense-in-depth features and consider worker safety. The Board recognized these improvements in letters dated March 18 and July 8, 1999. This has not been an easy process. This week, SRS held a symposium, with complex-wide participation, on the lessons learned during the Consolidated Tritium FSAR effort. Senior SRS management acknowledged the contribution of the Board and its staff to this success. This symposium should facilitate similar efforts at other sites. At SRS, the improvements are expected to be included in new projects, but may need to be backfit into older projects, such as the Tritium Extraction Facility (TEF). In late May, the Manager, DOE-SR requested WSRC to resolve these types of issues for TEF before completing the final design (site rep report 6/4/99). (I.A.4, II.B.1)

High Level Waste (HLW) Activities: The following are noteworthy:

- ! On Monday, the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) poured its 200th canister in FY 99, surpassing its production goal. Also, last weekend, the welder load cell was replaced, and DWPF began reducing the backlog of sealed but unwelded canisters (site rep report 6/25/99).
- ! On Thursday, the Consolidated Incinerator Facility (CIF) restarted operations after implementing a corrective action plan to resolve work control issues. Key elements of the plan included a mentoring program and an enhanced drill program (site rep report 7/2/99).
- ! For defense-in-depth, WSRC is now pursuing a design change to the new Replacement High Level Waste Evaporator (RHLWE). The specific change will permit sampling the vapor space for flammable gases in the event of an extended shutdown. The project is also pursuing procedure changes for both new and existing evaporators to start removing waste earlier in such an event, and thereby minimize flammable gas buildup. While procedures still need to be developed to use the new sampling port, it appears that these are positive responses to questions raised during a Board staff review during the week of April 23, 1999. (III.A.2)