

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 17, 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 September 17, 1999

High Level Waste Salt Processing Alternatives: WSRC is reviewing research and development results to update flowsheets, cost estimates, and uncertainties and to qualify project risk for the four short-list alternatives. WSRC management will be reviewing these results and expects to make a recommendation to DOE-SR next week.

The National Research Council Committee on SRS cesium processing alternatives, chaired by Milton Levenson, held public meetings in Augusta on Monday and Tuesday this week. The committee will address the following four points during their review: 1) was an appropriately comprehensive set of cesium partitioning alternatives identified and are there other alternatives that should be explored; 2) was the process used to screen the alternatives technically sound and did its application result in the selection of appropriate preferred alternatives; 3) are there significant barriers to the implementation of any of the preferred alternatives; 4) are the planned research and development activities, including pilot-scale testing, adequate to support implementation of a single preferred alternative. The committee is expected to issue an interim letter report in October and a final report in March 2000. (III.A.2)

FB Line Personnel Contamination: On Monday, the DOE-SR manager established a Type B Investigation Board to investigate this event. An investigation report is expected from this Board by October 15, 1999. WSRC reentered the vault vestibule this week and identified significant alpha contamination on a pair of gloves used during the event. Decontamination activities continue and vault reentry is expected next week. (III.A.1)

Americium/Curium Stabilization: DOE-SR recently approved Critical Decision 2A indicating that WSRC has adequately completed approximately 35 percent of the project. This approval is based on successful technology development using a full-scale demonstration of a batch melter system with surrogate feed. WSRC will now proceed into the detailed design of the project. However, project funding requirements do not appear to be supported in the fiscal year 2000 and 2001 budgets. If additional funding cannot be identified, DOE-SR will likely request WSRC to revise their schedule baseline based on expected funding which will result in additional delays in material stabilization. DOE-SR expects to understand the funding impact and be able to provide a high confidence schedule in October. DOE-SR is also developing summary information to respond to questions from DOE-HQ with regard to dispositioning this material through the High Level Waste system, which is an alternative to the baseline vitrification project. (III.A.1)