

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 22, 1997

TO: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending August 22, 1997

Mr. Ogg was on active duty with the Naval reserve all week.

A. Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) Activities: On July 8, 1997, a DOE-RL Readiness Assessment (RA) concluded that PFP was not ready to resume Phase 1 fissile material handling. Recently obtained DOE-RL correspondence regarding PFP restart indicate the following:

1. DOE-RL line management is misrepresenting the DOE-RL RA as having been completed. The RA was, in fact, curtailed in an incomplete status when failure became obvious.
2. DOE-RL does not intend to require either the contractor or itself to redo RA's for restart of Phase 1 fissile material handling.
3. DOE-RL intends that the contractor need not conduct an RA for Phase 2 fissile material handling and that the DOE-RL RA scope be significantly reduced so as not to address management and administrative systems (the primary cause in the DOE-RL RA failure).
4. Most of the DOE-RL pre-start conditions are poorly developed and trivial. For example, weak hazards knowledge by workers is resolved by "commit(ing) to a program plan".

On August 22nd, Mr. Gubanc met with the cognizant DOE-RL Assistant Manager to discuss this unacceptable situation. He committed to provide his response on Monday, August 25th.

B. TWRS Tank Sampling Progress:

1. Rotary Mode Core Sampling (RMCS) was expected to commence last week pending receipt of an air emission permit. (RMCS is required for the ten remaining high priority tanks identified in the Recom. 93-5 implementation plan.) Due to recent public criticisms on the handling of tank 103-C vapor emissions, state regulatory scrutiny has increased. Issuance of an air emission permit is not now expected for another 3-4 weeks.
2. Tank characterization crew performance continues to improve. During the months of April-June 1997, 21 core, 5 grab and 12 vapor samples were obtained. This was a 20% increase over the previous best quarter in core sampling and was accompanied by a significant reduction in occupational injuries as well.

C. TWRS Program Logic: Lockheed Martin (LMHC) has developed a "program logic" which identifies the technical and programmatic linkages between major TWRS activities. DOE-RL and LMHC have mutually agreed to manage the TWRS program through the use of the program logic (i.e., if its not on the logic it doesn't get funded). On August 21st, Mr. Gubanc confirmed that most Recom. 93-5 commitments are reflected in the program logic. DOE-RL is investigating those few which could not be found to confirm that they exist at lower levels in the logic.

cc: Board Members