

# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 4, 1997

**TO:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director  
**FROM:** P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives  
**SUBJECT:** Activity Report for Week Ending April 18, 1997

There was no report for the week ending April 11, 1997, as we were both in Washington, D.C. meeting with the Board, staff, and other DNFSB Site Representatives.

A. Technical Changes to Recommendation Implementation: This week, we obtained the following information regarding potential changes being considered for DOE Implementation Plans (IPs):

**1. Recom. 93-5, TWRS Characterization:** On April 16, based on his prior oral communication with Chairman Conway, John Wagoner expressed his intent to submit a revision to the commitment for C-106 waste retrieval. We also understand DOE is negotiating a similar change to the Tri-Party Agreement.

**2. Recom. 94-1, Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF):** On April 1, 1997, DOE-RL forwarded a proposed change to the 94-1 IP commitments concerning spent fuel at Hanford for Secretarial transmittal to the Board. These changes reflect the same information DOE-RL provided to the Board in January regarding delays in the initiation and completion of SNF removal from the K Basins.

**3. Recom. 94-1, Plutonium Stabilization:** In a letter dated April 11, 1997, DOE-RL reiterated its continuing concern that Babcock and Wilcox Hanford Co. (BWHC) management has not adequately addressed problems that have kept the Plutonium Finishing Plant in a fissile material handling curtailment since December 24, 1996. Several 94-1 milestones, including Pu solution stabilization, Pu polycube stabilization, and Pu metal and oxide repackaging remain at risk with lessening chances of on-time completion.

B. Spent Nuclear Fuel Project: On April 4, 1997, DOE-RL gave its approval to start construction of the Canister Storage Building (CSB) superstructure. Due to work in progress on CSB support facilities and final preparation work for the superstructure, actual erection of structural steel will not start until the end of April. DOE is reaching final resolution of design and safety issues concerning the Cold Vacuum Drying (CVD) facility this week. DOE-RL expects to give its permission to start CVD construction by April 22. Duke Engineering Services Hanford (DESH) continues work at the K Basins to prepare for installation of the Fuel Retrieval System, the Integrated Water Treatment System and the Cask and Transportation System.

C. Worker Integrity: On April 9, a PNNL Radiological Control Technician (RCT) knowingly disregarded a work permit requirement to wear neutron dosimetry. This is the third worker integrity violation on-site, that we know of, in seven months (see weekly report for January 31, 1997). We are trying to ascertain whether this reflects an actual increase of such problems or better reporting brought about by management efforts to improve accountability.

D. External Contacts:

**1. Hanford Citizens Advisory Board (HAB):** Mr. Gubanc has been invited to address the HAB on May 2 on the mission, roles and issues of the DNFSB.

**2. Tri-City Herald:** The lead reporter on Hanford issues for the local newspaper has expressed an interest in

learning more about the DNFSB. We have provided him publicly available documentation relating to the Board's charter, membership, site weekly reports, Recommendation 93-5, and Hanford construction and configuration management. We anticipate that he will be contacting Chairman Conway in the near future to obtain Board perspectives on a variety of issues.

cc:

Board Members