

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 21, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: P.F. Gubanc & D.G. Ogg, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Activity Report for Week Ending March 21, 1997

A. DOE-RL Assignment of Performance Based Fee Incentives: The Site Representatives continue to find weaknesses in the performance incentives negotiated between DOE-RL and their various contractors. Many of these incentives apply directly to the contractor's performance relative to the protection of public and worker health and safety. One recent example involves the issue of water clarity at the N Basin where Bechtel Hanford, Inc. (BHI) conducts deactivation work.

- Since 1995, N Basin water clarity has been recognized as very poor and needing improvement to enhance worker safety and productivity.
- On October 8, 1996, DOE-RL issued BHI's Performance Objectives and Criteria (POCs) for the period of October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997. For the first time, a POC for N Basin water clarity was included. Unfortunately, the POC listed the criterion as "needs to be defined" and the due date as "TBD."
- In December 1996, DOE-RL and BHI project personnel negotiated an objective, measurable POC for N Basin water clarity.
- On January 13, 1997, poor water clarity contributed to dropping a 14 ton waste container in N Basin.
- On February 21, 1997, DOE-RL formally transmitted the revised N Basin POC to BHI (i.e., about one month from the performance completion date).
- Currently, BHI is testing and bringing into operation two water filtration systems and a chemical treatment system for the N Basin water. However, project personnel indicate that the POC for water clarity improvement by March 31, may not be met.

The site representatives discussed with John Wagoner the lack of rigor and timeliness in addressing the N Basin water clarity issue. We will continue to follow this subject and review the adequacy of performance based fee incentives that relate to public and worker safety.

On a related note, this week DOE finally publicly acknowledged that they had paid Westinghouse for several 1995 tank farm performance incentives where the work was not accomplished as advertised (disputed payments are in the millions of dollars). In some instances, DOE did not physically verify the work before approving payment. In one instance, incorrect drawings (advertised as complete and the incentive paid) resulted in a near-miss event where workers were exposed to energized equipment thought to be tagged out.

B. K-Basins Electrical System Walkdowns: Currently, Duke Engineering and Services Hanford, Inc. (DESH) is conducting a complete walkdown of electrical systems at the K Basins and supporting buildings. Several drivers motivated this activity including: the DOE-RL Performance Assessment Division review of August through September, 1996, the contractor's Facility Evaluation Board (FEB) review of November, 1996, and DESH management desire to have better control of configuration management of the facility in light of upcoming operations for spent nuclear fuel retrieval. Completion of this activity will also satisfy direction from Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) to assess potential electrical safety hazards at Hanford facilities.

C. Steam Utilities Contract Signed: Last week, DOE-RL signed a 25 year contract with Johnson Controls, Inc. (JCI) to renovate and operate the site's steam utilities. In particular, JCI is to replace the large existing steam plants in the 200 and 300 Areas with 44 small package boilers by the end of 1997. JCI will retain

ownership, operation and maintenance responsibility for these boilers. We are working to understand how this transition will be managed so as to not impact operations, how consistency with facility safety bases will be assured (e.g., is steam essential to operate emergency ventilation turbines), and what will be DOE's role in providing oversight of those boilers which support safety related functions.

D. Visit by Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Chairperson: Dr. Shirley Jackson and members of her staff visited the Tri-Cities on March 17-20. DOE facilities visited by the NRC included Tank Farms, 242-A Evaporator, Waste Encapsulation & Storage Facility (WESF, contains Cs and Sr capsules), K-Basins, Canister Storage Building, N-Reactor, C-Reactor and the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF).

cc: Board Members