

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 16, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: J. Kent Fortenberry / Joe Sanders
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending October 16, 1998

Failure to Perform Dissolver Pre-Start Verifications at F-Canyon - Poor execution of operating procedures led to charging sand, slag, and crucible (SS&C) into the F-Canyon dissolver without verifying authorization-basis related parameters (offgas flow and temperature). This situation was discovered after charging the dissolver, but prior to starting dissolver operations. Dissolver parameters were subsequently verified to be within specification. WSRC is taking actions to address conduct of operations issues and procedure inadequacies. A more subtle contributor to this event, which has been discussed with WSRC and DOE-SR, was the performance of operator procedures by supervisors.

Performance Based Incentives (PBI's) - SRS has established 21 PBI's for FY1999. Incentive fees for these PBI's represent only about 37% of the total \$61.5 million annual award fee pool. A summary of the PBI activities follows:

DWPF canister production	K-Area Material Storage Project (RFETS Pu)
SAR & TSR implementation at Tank Farms	Heavy water operations and storage
New technology for high-level waste retrieval	Movement of K-Basin cobalt to L-Basin
Management of small HLW projects	Reduction of excess equipment/facilities
Consolidated Incinerator Facility (CIF)	Reduction of waste generation
H-Canyon spent fuel stabilization	Reduction in low-level waste volume
HB-Line Stabilization of Pu sweepings	Environmental Restoration Program activities
Transfer and dissolving of RFETS SS&C	Deactivation of 232-H (tritium extraction)
Characterization of Pu residues at FB-Line	Reservoir function testing
235-F modified vault for staging RFETS material	New maintenance management system
Comprehensive Nuclear Materials Management System (CNMMS)	

Tritium Facility 233-H, Room 32 DOE Operational Readiness Review (ORR) - The DOE ORR for the Non-Nuclear Reconfiguration (NNR) project in Building 233-H, Room 32 started this week. The facility appears to have applied lessons learned from the startup of the Environmental Conditioning Chambers, resulting in better procedures. No pre-start issues have been identified at this time. Room 32 includes two function test bell jars. A deuterium function test conducted during the ORR leaked deuterium into the bell jar. This problem will need to be resolved before functioning of tritium units commences.

Tritium Facilities Authorization Agreement - In June, 1998, following an Operational Readiness Review (ORR), DOE-SR approved startup of the new Environmental Conditioning Chambers at Tritium Facilities. However, the Tritium Facilities Authorization Agreement (AA) was not amended to include this new mission in the scope of work. At that time, the Room 32 ORR was scheduled for July, and it was agreed that the AA would be revised after startup of Room 32. The delay in the startup of Room 32 has resulted in a corresponding delay in revising the Tritium Facilities AA. This reflects a site-wide paradigm that continues to view letters of authorization from DOE, rather than the AA, as the ultimate authorization of operations. Discussions with DOE-SR will likely result in specific direction to DOE line management reiterating the role of the AA. As a long term correction, DOE-SR is developing specific direction for the maintenance of an AA.