

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 25, 2011

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending March 25, 2011

U Plant: The contractor performed a Management Assessment (MA) to determine if they were ready to grout the first section of the facility, a low-risk electrical gallery outside of the canyon. The project plans to grout the canyon cells and the surrounding galleries prior to the building demolition. The contractor and the Richland Operations Office (RL) concluded that grouting of this section of the electrical gallery does not require a readiness assessment. The MA team had three findings from the first phase of the assessment, one being the contractor could not find the calculations that verify the structure would withstand the load from the wet grout. The second phase of the assessment will include observations of this initial grouting. This grouting is considered a test to ensure the process works before it is used for the rest of the facility. The contractor stated that future grouting evolutions will not require a formal readiness assessment, but RL is still evaluating this decision.

Tank Farms: Contractor management approved removing the compensatory measures first imposed last year for weaknesses in the emergency management program because they concluded they were no longer needed. The measures were imposed by the Office of River Protection (ORP) midway through an assessment of the radiological controls, emergency preparedness, and corrective action programs (see Activity Report 4/16/2010). The contractor revised their drill program and conducted numerous drills as well as other corrective actions.

Plutonium Finishing Plant: During a walkdown of the exterior of the facility, the site rep noted some doors, including several at the Plutonium Reclamation Facility (PRF), were not posted with warning signs for confinement boundary controls (see Activity Report 3/11/11). The site rep discussed this with the shift manager, who explained the majority of the doors are posted and the others may not need them. The shift manager and ventilation system design authority have been discussing the specific wording that should be used on the signs for the remaining doors.

The contractor completed size-reducing the first pencil tank assembly in the PRF canyon and completed sealing-out and packaging most of the pieces for disposal. Three segments of the pencil tanks remain to be removed from the canyon, but work was stopped because workers were reassigned to perform higher priority work. The field work supervisor reported that they are evaluating using a band saw to cut the remaining pencil tank assemblies to accelerate the cutting process.

Waste Retrieval Project: The contractor retrieved the first remote-handled drum from the 12B burial ground. During a walkdown with the facility manager, the site rep learned that the contractor has retrieved 59 other drums and three waste boxes. Contractor management stationed a senior supervisory watch (SSW) during startup, but they want to discontinue the SSW after demonstrating proficient use of the real-time radiography system.

Department of Energy: J. Dowell is now the RL Assistant Manager for the Central Plateau and S. Charboneau is filling his former position as the Acting Manager of ORP.