

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 30, 2012

**TO:** T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director  
**FROM:** D. Gutowski and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives  
**SUBJECT:** Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending November 30, 2012

**618-10 Burial Ground.** A lack of formality of operations while processing waste drums from this less than hazard category-3 (HC-3) facility resulted in significant operational issues. Because the facility is less than HC-3, the contractor is allowed to operate without the strict administrative controls often found in the Technical Safety Requirements for HC-2 and -3 facilities. Non-destructive analysis (NDA) of four drums using conservative assumptions indicated that four individual drums exceeded the HC-3 threshold limit. This conflicted with other NDA information which indicated the drums were below the threshold, so they were left in staging areas for some time. After a Richland Operations Office (RL) facility representative questioned the situation late last month, the contractor reburied the drums to remove them from plausible accident scenarios. During an extent of condition review, the contractor identified eight more drums in the 618-10 staging areas that conservatively exceed the HC-3 threshold and they were re-buried. They also noted at least 13 drums that may contain TRU waste were improperly sent to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF), and six of these were buried in ERDF. All retrieval operations in the 618-10 facility were stopped this week and additional controls will need to be put in place before RL authorizes work with these drums.

**Tank Farms.** The contractor started full visual examination of the annulus of double-shell tank (DST) AY-101 as part of the response to the leak in the primary tank of DST AY-102 (see Activity Report 11/13/2012). ORP continues to negotiate with the State of Washington and other stakeholders to determine when and how the waste in AY-102 will be pumped out as well as which tank(s) will receive the waste.

**Safety Culture/Recommendation 2011-1.** The Waste Treatment Plant contractor presented the status of their findings and actions regarding nuclear safety culture to ORP. A significant issue addressed was both the contractor and ORP need to develop clear Roles, Responsibilities, Authorities, and Accountabilities. ORP separately discussed the actions they are taking to address near term improvement actions from the ORP Safety Culture Improvement Plan with representatives from EM Headquarters. The Tank Farms contractor completed their preliminary assessment of the results of their Safety Conscious Work Environment (SCWE) survey. This assessment used new DOE guidance for SCWE self-assessments developed as a part of the response to Recommendation 2011-1. The Tank Farms Contractor concluded that their organization has a strong but not yet fully mature SCWE that shows evidence of improvement since previous assessments.

**Central Plateau Contractor.** The contractor's Nuclear Safety and Performance evaluation Board (NSPEB) performed a detailed review of the QA program as an extent of condition review following a quality assurance (QA) inspector intentionally not following procedures at the Cold Vacuum Drying Facility (see 9/28/12 report). The NSPEB found no more cases where QA personnel signed for work activities that were not performed. However, they identified a number of administrative errors by QA or Quality Control Inspectors. They also identified numerous cases where the quality of work performed by other workers did not meet management expectations.