



August 26, 2015

To: Chair Sean Sullivan
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board

Subject: Personal Testimonial on Safety Culture at WTP

I have been on assignment to the Department of Energy – Office of River Protection since August 2013 from the Savannah River National Laboratory. I directly report to the WTP Senior Technical Authority and my work scope has included resolution of the technical issues for the WTP HLW and Pretreatment Facilities. This assignment has been directly involved with ensuring the integration of safety in the design of the WTP.

Before I arrived at Hanford, I had heard about many of the safety issues and potential problems at Hanford from various newspaper accounts and word of mouth from fellow employees who had worked on the project in the past. Therefore, I came to the assignment with some preconceived notions about Hanford and the WTP facilities.

The first part of my assignment with the Office of River Protection was to a team tasked with identifying all outstanding technical and safety issues with the WTP HLW Facility. This included an extensive review of all outstanding surveillances, corrective actions, DNFSB letters, Inspector General reports, Government Accountability Office reports, Differing Professional Opinion letters, and other relevant documents to identify design or safety issues. After identification, the team determined the path forward for closure or verified the successful closure to ensure that the issue was no longer a concern. This exercise is now being repeated with the WTP Pretreatment Facility. In working with this team, it was clear that easily implementable safety controls and potential hazards had not always been identified in the design. This inadequacy was attributed to the lack of alignment between the safety and design organizations and processes.

I have stayed involved with the resolution of these issues and with the assessments of the changes that have been made to the BNI and Office of River Protection processes to ensure that safety is adequately addressed. I have also witnessed firsthand the identification of safety concerns and the Office of River Protection's response. While some of the issues have been easy to resolve and close (simple design changes), others are more challenging and require more in-depth studies to obtain a coherent technical basis or changes to long-standing beliefs on mitigation strategies being used (radiolytic hydrogen generation). It is clear to me that there has been a shift in how these issues are handled and in the depths of the efforts to ensure that the issues are defensibly closed so that they do not become a problem again. Even though there is still progress to be made in fostering the relationships between the organizations

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and in changing the mind sets that may have already existed, it is clear that the Office of River Protection senior management is doing their part to make sure this happens and that their employees, as well as their contractors, feel free to express their concerns. I strongly believe this is why they have not made a commitment to the completion schedule because they are trying to make sure it is done right this time.

In summary, I believe positive changes are being made but they will take time to filter through the design because of the care that is being taken to definitively close issues. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide my personal testimonial on the WTP Safety Culture.



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