

U.S. Department of Energy

Office of River ProtectionP.O. Box 450, MSIN H6-60
Richland, Washington 99352

AUG 03 2006



06-WTP-106

Ms. Jane Hedges, Program Manager
Nuclear Waste Program
State of Washington
Department of Ecology
3100 Port of Benton Blvd.
Richland, Washington 99354**RECEIVED**
AUG 07 2006**EDMC**

Dear Ms. Hedges:

WEAR ALLOWANCES AND INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT FOR WASTE TREATMENT AND IMMOBILIZATION PLANT (WTP) VESSELS WITH PULSE JET MIXERS

- References:
1. Ecology letter, from S. Dahl, to R. J. Schepens, ORP and W. S. Elkins, BNI, "Wear Allowance and Integrity Assessment for Vessels with Pulse Jet Mixers," dated June 8, 2006.
 2. BNI letter, from J. P. Henschel, to R. J. Schepens, ORP, Report of External Flowsheet Review Team for the Hanford Tank Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant - Final Report Titled: "Comprehensive Review of the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant Flowsheet and Throughput," CCN: 132846, dated March 17, 2006.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of River Protection, has reviewed the letter from the Department of Ecology (Ecology) (Reference 1) which proposes two options for the resolution of the Ecology determination that the vessel wear allowances are inadequate and the wear allowance features are disapproved for nine WTP vessels mixed with Pulse Jet Mixers.

DOE has reviewed the proposed options, suggested by Ecology, and is not able to respond at this time because of ongoing activities, described below, to address the stated issue.

As your letter acknowledges, the External Flowsheet Review Team (EFRT), chartered by DOE, identified issues associated with the erosion wear estimates for the WTP vessels (Reference 2). At present, DOE, Bechtel National, Inc., and key EFRT Team members are finalizing the set of activities required to resolve the erosion wear issues. These activities will include: an independent expert review of the method and data used to estimate erosion wear, a reassessment of tank waste particulate characteristics, and a determination if additional testing is required.

AUG 03 2006

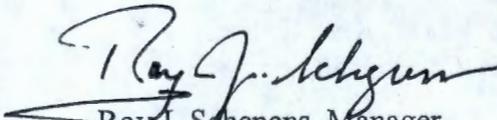
Ms. Jane Hedges
06-WTP-106

-2-

DOE will forward the approved issue resolution plans and resulting documentation as they become available to Ecology for review and approval. It is anticipated that these issues will be resolved and recommendations made by February 28, 2007.

DOE is requesting an extension to respond to the Reference 1, letter to February 28, 2007. We believe that this approach is compliant with the dangerous waste regulations and appropriately balances project risk.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Bill Hamel, Director, WTP Engineering Division, (509) 373-1569.



Roy J. Schepens, Manager
Office of River Protection



W. S. Elkins, Project Director
Bechtel National, Inc.

WED:WFH

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