



Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council

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April 3, 2017

Mr. Kevin Smith, Manager
Department of Energy-Office of River Protection
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Mr. Mark Lindholm, President and Project Manager
Washington River Protection Solutions
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UPDATE: TANK FARM VAPORS AND WORKER SAFETY

Dear Mr. Smith and Mr. Lindholm:

The Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (HAMTC) takes this opportunity to provide an update since its letters of June 20 and July 7 of 2016. While the intent of both letters are actively and aggressively being addressed, the Council is encouraged that this last year has been one of the most impactful and productive for improvements in worker safety at Hanford. The concerns associated with tank farm vapors and worker safety expressed in our letters have helped to serve as a catalyst for increased site monitoring, improvements in tank farm infrastructure, increased labor-management dialogue, transparent workforce communication, enhanced medical programs and most critical...improved worker safety.

Through collaboration and good faith interactions between WRPS and HAMTC, the demands and challenges extended to DOE in these letters have thus far, either been met or accommodated through reasonable alternatives while taking into consideration site physical limitations or necessary operational flexibility. New vapor monitoring and detection equipment has been tested and is being deployed, new reader boards are being positioned including restricted road access during certain tank farm activities, the existing fence lines are being re-evaluated, enhanced and transparent planning efforts, and stack heights and exhausters are being installed/increased where necessary.

In addition to the improvements referenced above, one of the most critical factors contained in our letters was the mandatory use of supplied air. The Council is convinced that supplied air provides the best respiratory protection for workers potentially exposed to harmful vapors emanating from the tank farms. However, through a special Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with WRPS, workers are now allowed to utilize air purifying respirators (APR) in specific tank farm locations under certain circumstances. Under this MOA, an aggressive testing program was completed to ensure the effectiveness of the APR's, with confirmation by an independent, HAMTC-selected nationally-recognized team of consultants. This team has played a critical role in determining the appropriate use of APR's. In fact, their efforts have also played in a critical role in overall improvements to administrative and engineering controls. As such, their efforts should not only be recognized, but WRPS should seriously consider retaining this team in order to continue to provide a valuable resource for future worker safety and health improvements.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Lindholm

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Finally, the Council is confident that with this new level of collaboration and commitment to worker safety, the parties will continue to make every effort to address the safety and health concerns of HAMTC and its represented workforce. In addition, with the active participation of HAMTC representatives, we anticipate WRPS and DOE will continue their efforts to assure the timely disposition of all the actions documented in reviews/reports by external entities including the DOE Office Inspector General, the Hanford Tank Vapor Assessment Report, the DOE Office of Enterprise Assessment and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

In closing, while the Council is certainly pleased and encouraged by all the efforts and improvements described herein, we will continue to be actively engaged to ensure our expectations and demands that both the Department of Energy and Washington River Protection Solutions make every effort to provide a safe and healthy work environment, free from hazards, for our represented workers are implemented in a timely manner and sustained going forward.

Sincerely,

HANFORD ATOMIC METAL TRADES COUNCIL



David E. Molnaa

President