

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 30, 2017

TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Jennifer Meszaros and Rory Rauch, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending October 27, 2017

Building 9212/Oxide Conversion Facility: This week, operators visually identified potential indications of a pinhole leak in a credited hydrogen fluoride (HF) isolation valve. Workers are currently performing system maintenance; as such, the HF supply lines were already purged and the HF cylinder was isolated at the time operators discovered the potential leak. Operators identified the potential leak while performing valve alignments in the HF cylinder enclosure. Upon notification, the shift manager suspended all activities inside the enclosure pending additional inspection and leak testing of the isolation valve.

Building 3019: Isotek Systems, LLC, recently completed shipments of Consolidated Edison Uranium Solidification Project material to the Nevada Nuclear Security Site (NNSS) for disposal as low-level waste. The U-233 direct disposition campaign, which also included shipments of Zero Power Reactor plates to NNSS (see 11/4/11 report), addressed roughly 50% of the canister inventory stored at Building 3019. Isotek personnel plan to process the remaining inventory at the neighboring facility, Building 2026, prior to disposal (see 5/5/17 report).

Conduct of Operations: The CNS Y-12 production organization's action office recently held several training sessions on event management and recovery. The target audience for the training was those members of the management team primarily responsible for directing or approving actions taken in response to an event (i.e., production and facility operations management). The training was intended to clarify existing event recovery guidance and introduce new recovery guidance that has been drafted for incorporation into Y-12 procedures. The draft guidance is supplemented by a checklist, which contains criteria for responsible managers to use when evaluating the need to develop procedures that govern event recovery actions after a safe and secure configuration has been achieved. The resident inspectors previously identified a concern regarding the lack of criteria on this topic (see 8/25/17 report). The training sessions utilized a scenario-based format to reinforce the draft guidance and associated checklist. The resident inspectors observed the training and found it to be informative and engaging.

Performance Excellence: The Performance Enterprise System (PES) is one of the core tools described in the CNS strategic framework for performance excellence (see 5/8/15 report). PES is an integrated system for identifying, executing, and validating proposed improvements throughout all CNS programs and disciplines. PES has many guiding principles that align well with the fundamental principles of conduct of operations, such as verbatim compliance and continuous improvement. In support of these principles, CNS management implemented a new PES tool called the escalation process at the beginning of fiscal year 2018. This process is intended to provide a structured approach to communicate work scope/goals and devote the resources needed to address floor-level issues. Communication occurs in a tiered approach from the work team up to the executive leadership team. The process emphasizes resolving issues at the lowest level of the organization unless the resources required to resolve the issue must be raised to a level of management with a greater span of influence. The process is not intended to suppress management and stakeholder awareness of issues and clearly distinguishes between raising an issue for action vice awareness.