

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 1, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: Matthew Duncan and Brandon Weathers, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending May 1, 2020

DNFSB Staff Activity: Several members of the technical staff had a teleconference with CNS and NPO personnel to discuss the results of a review of technical deviations for nuclear criticality safety evaluations (see 11/22/19 and 2/7/20 reports).

COVID-19: CNS began executing a multi-stage recovery plan for resuming additional operations. The initial stage of the plan involves a sub-set of the workforce preparing facilities that had stopped operating during the reduced mission critical operating status. These preparatory activities are focused on inspecting facilities and critical equipment and performing required preventive maintenance and calibrations. The preparatory activities also involve establishing critical supplies such as hand sanitizer, cleaning equipment, and personal protective equipment. In preparation of beginning the recovery plan activities, CNS issued a standing order that provides guidance to the workforce for minimizing the risk of COVID-19 exposure. The standing order primarily relies on increased sanitary measures (hand washing and cleaning), social distancing, and a self-screening medical questionnaire. Personnel may voluntarily use face coverings at the site and are required to use them when essential job activities do not allow six feet of separation between workers and there are no other controls in place.

NPO approved a CNS request for relief for safety basis deliverables during the reduced mission critical operating status. Relief was requested for annual updates to safety basis documents and timeliness requirements for the unreviewed safety question process. CNS still plans to complete the Y-12 annual updates in 2020, but requested that the original schedule for submitting the documents to NPO be adjusted. Processing time requirements associated with new information, operational events, and discrepant as-found conditions may be exceeded for situations that do not impact mission critical operations. Any affected active operations will be placed in a safe configuration and will remain paused until the procedural requirements are completed. CNS will also notify NPO if any of the processing time requirements will be exceeded. For situations that impact mission critical operations, the existing timeliness requirements will be maintained.

Building 9204-2E: Earlier this year, a physical barrier (chip guard) was installed in a glovebox to reduce the potential for chip turnings to migrate to an adjacent area of the glovebox. This barrier was installed in accordance with the Inadvertent Accumulation Prevention Program as one of many corrective actions that CNS has been taking since discovering multiple areas of unanalyzed uranium accumulation in equipment (see 5/4/18 and 7/12/18 reports). When the operators attempted to perform machining operations with the newly installed chip guard, it interfered with the range of motion of equipment in the glovebox. The chip guard was removed and a standing order was put in place that requires removal of all machine turnings from the glovebox after the glovebox operations are completed and that a senior manager verify that the area has been cleaned and no machine turnings are present. The standing order will remain in place while the chip guard is redesigned to address the operating issue.