

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 4, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and Z. C. McCabe, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending December 4, 2020

Tank Farms: SRR is removing the four spent ion exchange columns that were used for processing the first tank through Tank Closure Cesium Removal. The resident inspector observed the pre-job briefing and the transfer of the first column from the process enclosure to a flatbed trailer using two cranes. The transfer went well. The columns will be stored awaiting a decision on disposition.

Defense Waste Processing Facility: SRR is exploring the possibility of reclassifying the functional classification of current and future Failed Equipment Storage Vaults from safety significant to process support (i.e., general service). SRR is evaluating whether they could lower the damage ratio from 1 to 0.1 for the solid glass in the failed melters due to seismic events.

Savannah River Tritium Enterprise (SRTE): Two maintenance mechanics installed insulation for process chill water air separators without controlling the potential hazardous energy (temperatures exceeding 200°F). The maintenance organization First Line Manager (FLM) assigned two mechanics to obtain the insulation and a third to install the insulation. The FLM discussed the fact that the work package and single point lockout (SPLT) had not been approved yet with the mechanic they tasked with installing the insulation. The other two mechanics retrieved the insulation and installed it without signing onto the SPLT, having a work package in hand, a pre-job briefing or being released to do the work. Investigation after the fact revealed that the construction superintendent heard the two mechanics discussing the job before they installed the insulation and asked about the SPLT and work package. When the mechanics informed the superintendent that they didn't have either, he advised them to take a time-out and wait until the proper documentation is complete. Discussions during an issue review revealed that the mechanics saw the task as a "fix-it-now" type of a job, which is why the superintendent's advice was disregarded. Further, when asked about the barricade requiring the shift operations manager's approval to enter, the mechanics stated that they believed they were able to enter the barricade because they were the ones that installed it approximately a month prior.

While the two mechanics were completing the task, the other mechanic was setting up the SPLT and going through the proper work release prior to going into the field. When the other mechanic arrived with the FLM, they noted that the work had been mostly completed and returned to the maintenance shop to discuss it with the other mechanics who informed them that they had completed the job. The FLM informed management of the issue and took a time-out.

L-Area/Transportation: While doing preparation activities for shipping fuel to H-Canyon, the FLM noticed that the Annual Inspection Report for the railroad on SafetyNet, SRS's safety documentation database, was out of date. Investigation after the fact showed that the inspection was current for the railroad, but SafetyNet had just not been updated. An ambiguous procedure step likely contributed to this error going unnoticed since October despite several opportunities to identify the error.