

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 3, 2021

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: L. Lin and Z. C. McCabe, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending December 3, 2021

Staff Activity: A. Hutain of the Board's technical staff was onsite this week to complete training and to support the staff review of sustained operations at the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF).

Salt Waste Processing Facility: SWPF completed briefing all shifts on conduct of operations refresher training and exited their Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) compliance focus period this week (see 11/26/21 report). On Wednesday, the facility initiated their recovery plan for removing solids from the solvent drain tank by recirculating the solution through a filter in the laboratory hot cell (see 11/19/21 report). The solution is then transferred to the solvent hold tank and the contents are sampled afterwards. The Board's technical staff and resident inspector (RI) observed operations from the control room and the field. They noted that the pre-job brief was thorough and that there was good communication between the various groups. The resident inspector noted some opportunities for improvement regarding radiological protection practices to minimize the potential for spreading contamination. For example, when exiting a contamination area, personnel should remove their outer pair of gloves before replacing the barrier closure. In addition, after exiting the area, the hands could be frisked first so that personnel can use their hands to brace themselves for the foot monitor without potentially spreading contamination where they touch. In this case, no contamination was found by the hand and foot frisk or by the whole body contamination monitor.

Oral Board: An RI observed an oral board for a DOE-SR Facility Representative candidate. The RI noted instances where the phrasing of the questions could be improved to avoid biasing the candidate and to gain a better understanding of the candidate's knowledge and thought processes.

Tank Farms: Tank Farms personnel unknowingly failed to complete a TSR surveillance requirement within the required timeframe of 24 hours, but identified the error and entered the appropriate limiting condition for operation within the TSR allowed grace period of 25%. The surveillance in question requires verifying that the exhaust flow is above the minimum value on Tank 8, which is a rapid generation tank (i.e., rapid generation of hydrogen, a flammable gas). Tank Farms performs this surveillance twice per day through their operator rounds. They did not realize that the flow indicator was taken out of service by a lockout hung earlier this week. The operators performing the rounds on both the first shift and the following shift found the indicator to be out of service but chose to read another (uncredited) instrument to complete the surveillance. The communication between the operator and shift management was incomplete, which facilitated the error. The error was identified after the rounds were reviewed by the control room operator on the second shift, who questioned the appropriateness of taking the reading from an uncredited instrument. The control room operator informed the shift manager who took the appropriate actions. Tank Farms personnel are planning to hold an issue investigation next week.